

SOCCER

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SOCCER WEEKLY

AUSTRALIAN & BRITISH SOCCER WEEKLY

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THIS WEEK...

3.....FIFA World Stars Clash
 4.....FIFA World Stars Clash
 5.....1999 Ericsson National Awards
 6.....Australian features
 7.....Australian features
 8.....Australian features
 9.....Australian features
 10.....NSW Super League
 11.....Soccer Woman
 12.....Queensland
 13.....Victoria Premier League
 14.....Victoria League
 15.....Soccer Canberra
 16.....FIFA WORLD STARS NIGHT
 17.....FIFA WORLD STARS NIGHT

18.....Global Game Cover
 19.....Asia
 20.....Africa
 21.....Scandinavia
 22.....North America
 23.....South America
 24.....Italy
 25.....Europe
 26.....Europe
 27.....Europe
 28.....UK
 29.....UK
 30.....UK
 31.....UK

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FOR NEWS ON THE ERICSSON CUP AWARDS NIGHT TURN TO PAGE 5

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Northern Spirits Night of Nights

By Melissa Muscat

It was a night of glitz and glam for the administrators and players of Northern Spirit.

Approximately 700 guests attended the 1999 Inaugural Gala Players Presentation Night.

The event took place at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre Darling Harbour.

This was no ordinary presentation, but nor was the entire season of Sydney's newest glamour club Northern Spirit, who made it to the finals in their first year.

The players were almost unrecognisable from their red and white playing strip to the black tie attire which was worn by every player and gentleman in the room.

Players and officials attended the gala including supporters of the Spirit.

The usual haze of white which is seen in the 'Bob Stand' was transformed into a more civilised

shade of black applauding their team in a more refined manner.

Then suddenly, just as it was too good to be true, the roar of 'Hendo, Hendo' deafened the room as their king took to the stage.

They couldn't contain themselves and they didn't seem to want to.

The man who stood out from the crowd was Gabriel 'Charlie Chaplain' Mendez.

The pint sized No.10 turned up with a top hat and a cane, looking more like an entertainer than a professional soccer player.

There were many highlights of the evening including the auction of the player jerseys.

The highest sold jersey was that of Australian player, Harry Kewell. Kewell's shirt was snapped up for \$5000.

The second highest bid was for the No.9 jersey of Northern Spirit player/coach, Graham Arnold which went for \$4500.

And to the awards which the players were eagerly awaiting all night.

The coach's 'Player of the year' award went to none other than the popular Paul Henderson.



Coach's Player of the Year Winner... Paul Henderson with coach Graham Arnold.

The young keeper has been in terrific form for the Spirit throughout his debut season.

From the speech that followed, it was clear that 'Hendo' was quite nervous about the attention.

Othe awards on the night included the 'Player's player of the year', which was given to Paul Bilokapic. This award was a result of nominations from the individual players.

It was a night enjoyed by all but somehow I don't think the celebrations stopped there.

Something gave me a sneaking suspicion that there were going to be a lot of sore heads the next morning.

Ths Spirit has taken the city by storm and hopefully they can continue their superb form both on and off the field, next season.



Paul Bilokapic... Players Player of the Year.

FIFA World Stars Clash



Australian stars on top of the World



Record crowd celebrates with an Aussie victory

AUSTRALIA 3
Zelic 46, Emerton 57,
o.g. Margas 66
FIFA WORLD STARS 2
Yakin 10, Rufer 90
At Stadium Australia, Homebush
Friendly Game

By Bonnie Mersiades

The Socceroos have their first home win under their belt since 'that night' on November 29, 1997 when we so cruelly missed out on qualifying for France '98.

With the remainder of 1997 and 1998 being a time that many Australian players and fans would prefer to forget, Socceroo skipper, Alex Tobin described the 3-2 victory against the World All Stars on Saturday night at the newly-baptised Stadium Australia as a "relief".

"Yes, there was a bit of added pressure because of the MCG game. We were all keen to win in front of a home crowd and also on such an occasion."

The Socceroos won in style, and with quite a bit in reserve also.

With Paul Okon, the player regarded by many as our most talented to date, making a welcome return to the national side for the first time in four years, the Socceroo squad that took the park upped-the-ante once more on the term 'the Dream Team'.

Wearing a new, predominantly green strip — which some spectators commented made the players fade into the pitch from the long distance to the uppermost stands of Stadium Australia — the Socceroos dominated the early part of the match. They were fast, sharp and creative.

Okon, along with midfielder Ned Zelic, stamped authority, control and class on top of a team that already had skill, passion and commitment to burn.

As early as the fifth minute, Stan Lazaridis broke clear down the left and looked extremely threatening, but unfortunately his shot for goal was weak.

His attempt looked worst than it was because of the first of many athletic saves from Paris St German goalkeeper, Bernard Lama.

Lama was forced to make a save off Mark Viduka shortly afterwards, which was followed-up by a strike from Kewell which sailed just over the bar.

Despite Australia's four shots on target in the first half compared with the All Stars' one, they went into the break with a 1-0 lead, courtesy of Switzerland's Murat Yakin's header from a 9th minute corner.

Just one minute into the second half, Zelic beat Jorge Campos, who was substituted for Lama at half-time, with a long range shot from 25 metres out which lifted and sped unerringly into the back of the net. It was 'Classic Zelic'.

Twelve minutes later, Zelic set up the second Australian goal when his trademark pinpoint pass

threaded its way through to Brett Emerton who controlled the ball expertly before slamming it past the diving 'keeper into the back of the net.

It must have been a big thrill for 20 year old Emerton to play in such illustrious company on his own side — let alone the other side!

He had only just come on due to an injury to crowd darling, Harry Kewell, who had been brought down by a tackle from behind by South Africa's Shaun Bartlett.

Zelic was instrumental also in the third goal. Substitute defender Kevin Muscat was on the end of a Zelic pass into the penalty area, which Muscat cleverly cut back and gave Chile's Javier Margas little alternative but to direct the ball into his own goal.

Looking as if this was all relatively easy, the Socceroos relaxed a little to give the World Stars a consolation goal to one of their old foes — Kiwi and former Bundesliga player, Wynton Rufer, who will be captain-coach of the new Auckland Kings in the National Soccer League next season.



Ned Zelic takes a shot as Taribo West watches on.

Rufer showed his class with a well-taken goal by squeezing a tight angled shot between 'keeper Zeljko Kalac and the right upright.

The Socceroos repeatedly opened up the World Stars defence with most of the raids instigated on the left where both Stan Lazaridis and Harry Kewell were confident and strong.

While Zelic and Okon shone amongst the Australians, all of the team showed commitment and class. Steve Corica, John Aloisi, Stan Lazaridis and Tony Vidmar had strong games, along with substitutes Muscat, Emerton and Hayden Foxe.

The World Stars' Leonardo was dominant in midfield for the FIFA side, but was not able to have much of an impact due to the lack of support from midfield.

After the match, Raul Blanco described the result as "very pleasing".

"The game was of a high standard and played openly."

"We wanted to make sure that the home fans went away with a win for the new stadium's opening and

we've achieved that objective," he said.

When later asked whether Okon's and Zelic's similar playing styles was a selection problem, the acting Socceroo coach said, "A coach should be so lucky!"

Blanco's possible new boss, Roy Hodgson, agreed that it was a "very good game".

"There were two quality sides out there tonight. I think Australia deserved to win, but that's not surprising considering the home crowd and the Stadium opening. It was also important for Australian football that you got a win put away."

Both Tobin and Klinsmann complimented the Stadium. While agreeing that the playing surface was not up to "usual" standards — because of the rugby league match held a few days earlier in the rain, they agreed that it will be a great home for many football matches over the near future.

"I think we all realise now just how lucky our Under 23 players are, that they've got a chance to make this Stadium their own," added Tobin.

Hodgson said he was impressed with the Australian players and their style of play.

"We trained with the Under 23 side and there is some good talent there also. The future looks very rosy."

As one might expect, there were quite a few knockers of the World Stars side. For a start, FIFA had decided not to endorse the team as a FIFA side at the last minute because commercial issues could not be resolved between them and the games' promoters, Left Field Solutions.

With Ansett and Rexel Australia having such prominent roles in the on-field and off-field proceedings, it is not difficult to understand FIFA's decision in view of their strict policy on sponsorship and commercial issues.

However, regardless of the name — and despite what others might have said — the visiting side was an impressive one.

Socceroo and Manchester United goalkeeper, Mark Bosnich, said that, "there are so many good players in the world today, that you could have five or six teams of All Stars."

Considering the World Stars squad included German World Cup winning captain, Jurgen Klinsmann, French goalkeeper, Bernard Lama, Brazil's Leonardo and the \$74m man, Christian Vieri, it is hard to sustain the view that this was not a quality team.



The South Australian connection after the game, from l to r, Aurelio Vidmar, Tony Vidmar, John Aloisi and Captain Alex Tobin.

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 88,101

Referee: Masayoshi Okada (Japan)

Australia: Bosnich (Kalac, 56m), T Vidmar, Lazaridis, Okon, Tobin, Popovic (Foxe, 72m), Zelic (Grella, 85m), Viduka (A Vidmar, 45m) Kewell (Emerton, 56m), Aloisi, Corica

World Stars: Lama (Campos, 45m), Song, Cesar, Yakin (Le Tissier, 78m), Radebe (Ramzy, 45m), Vieri, Leonardo, West (Margas, 45m), Tsymbalar (Rufer, 63m), Buruk (Bartlett, 45m), Klinsmann (Branca, 45m)

Yellow cards:
 Rigobert Song

Player of the Match:

3: Ned Zelic
 2: Paul Okon
 1: Leonardo

Of additional interest was the fact that the World Stars coach, Roy Hodgson, is known to be talking with Soccer Australia about the possibility of becoming the next Socceroos coach.

As many of the World Stars had not been in the country long, and also had enjoyed Sydney's night life the previous evening, they were only capable of playing the game at a pace.

The big crowd would have enjoyed seeing a bit more of Christian Vieri. As well as being a multi-millionaire, he's also an ex Sydney boy of sorts — at least Sydney-siders like to claim him! — but his task was made more difficult by the lack of service from midfield, other than from Brazilian, Leonardo.

With last Saturday's game heralded as the unofficial start of the 2002 World Cup campaign, let's hope Hodgson knows what he's talking about.

The pre-match extravaganza was targeted more to the television audience than the 88,101 who didn't fill the 110,000 capacity showpiece of the 2000 Olympics.

Interestingly, the footballing public showed their savvy, with many of the high-priced \$250 tickets and low-priced tickets in corner positions, left vacant.

The crowd was entertained by an ensemble of popular artists, as well as Men at Work and INXS with Terence Trent Darby.

To cap off this extravaganza — which was really a sidebar to the main event for most of the audience — there were the obligatory fireworks.

However, it's not clear that many in the Stadium could actually see them, although presumably television viewers enjoyed the pyrotechnic spectacular.

Wendy Matthews gave us her version of the national anthem decked out in patriotic gear which included a shirt boasting both the Aboriginal flag and the Southern Cross.

FIFA World Stars Clash

OUR NIGHT OF NIGHTS, SPOILT

By Dwyght Tuffnell

For all the hype, the official opening of Stadium Australia was, quite frankly, a major disappointment.

It was built up to be the biggest event in Australian soccer ever but never lived up to all the excitement.

Australian soccer fans deserved better (especially for the prices of some tickets), although the game was quite



Two of the biggest names at Saturday's clash, Leonardo (l) with the \$74m man, Vieri.

good, the rest of the show left much to be desired.

For one thing, the pitch at Stadium Australia was a complete embarrassment.

Cut up and rock hard, and of course there had to be the rugby league markings, which it seems no big soccer game in Australia these days can do without.

The pre-match entertainment dragged on a little and just what was the significance of having a ball with an NRL logo, an AFL logo and a Wallabies logo? Wasn't this supposed to be a soccer game?

The poor old TV viewer didn't fare much better. Unless you were a subscriber to Optus Vision, there was no way you could see what was supposedly our biggest game in years live.

In Melbourne, the telecast on commercial TV didn't begin until 11:15pm, and in Sydney the game didn't start till almost 10:30pm.

Channel Seven instead treated its viewers to the AFL blockbuster between Port Adelaide and Richmond in Melbourne and a Union test in Sydney.

The way they've treated soccer since acquiring the rights has been disgusting, you could be forgiven for not knowing which television station actually has the rights to broadcast matches in this country.

Seven's coverage had both its good and bad points.

Thankfully, they had the sense to draft in a commentator who actually knows something about the game, Paul Williams.

Williams, as always was very good and his sidekick Paul Wade, though a bit excitable, was pretty good value.

The one thing that frustrated most viewers was the ad breaks, during the game.

Everyone is used to watching a game straight through, not pestered by commercials every five or six minutes as was the case on Saturday night.

In other sports such as cricket and AFL, there is scope to fit these breaks in, but it just does work in soccer. But it's something we should expect should from now on when the Socceroos are playing with Seven having the rights.



Bosnich... who will he play for next month as Manchester United hit town.

Well what a night we experienced on Saturday at Stadium Australia. The official opening of the stadium was celebrated by a record crowd for a game of soccer in Australia, as well as an Aussie victory.

It was good to see all the Australians back home and the game went along way in erasing the forgettable events of November 29 at the MCG in 1997 when Australia failed in its qualification for the World Cup.

Soccer Australia would be happy to see that the night was a success but the reality to the whole occasion is that despite a good crowd of 88,101, Soccer Australia will be lucky to break even for the event.

Soccer Australia were given an amount of some \$350,000 from the promoters of the game, Left-Field Solutions but that money was used to pay for the expenses of the event which amounts to a small fortune.

SA LOSE OUT ON PROFIT

at the last minute, played extremely well despite some of them having flown all the way around the world to be here and in Christian Vieri's case, who played three games in only a week, must be commended.

Soccer Australia should make a nice profit next month during Manchester United's tour Down Under for two games but who knows.

The SA will not have to pick up the expenses of the two game tour as this will be done by the promoters.

United say that they will tour with a full squad which means that on July 15 and July 18, both the MCG and Stadium Australia should be filled to capacity to see the greatest team in the world at present take on our Socceroos.

One the other side of the coin, we all hope that the Australians who play abroad, will return for the two games.

As the game is not an official international match, clubs will be hesitant to allow players to play in games which are meaningless.

The other taking point which will arise from the



The Aussie boys celebrate after the 3-2 win at Stadium Australia on the weekend.

Over the week long build up to the game, Soccer Australia's expenses included the payment of travel costs for the players, accommodation costs and payments to both the players and coaching officials.

This may not sound like a great deal but the fact that only 88,000 fans turned up is a worry.

Despite the attendance being a record crowd for a game of soccer, the promoters and the SA were quietly hoping to brake the 100,000 mark and well they should have.

The FIFA World Stars despite being thrown together

Manchester United tour will be the availability of new star, Mark Bosnich.

Bosnich did not reveal who he would play for on this tour and the decision will be made even tougher as it will be his first opportunity to play for United, and if he was to pass it up for a Socceroo jersey, well then manager Alex Ferguson would not be too happy.

On the other hand, the Australian public will be even more disappointed in Bosnich should he decide to play for United.

Only time will tell.

Klinsmann's farewell

Now only a year and a bit out from the Olympic games, our coaching staff, which has yet to be finalised, must decide upon three over-age players to compete for the Olyroos in the 2000 Olympics.



Klinsmann... the last time we will see him playing on a pitch in Australia.

The rules allow for three over-aged players to compete for their nation during the Olympics and a number of men put their hands up on Saturday night, all who would add stability and experience to an Olyroo side which has not played up to expectations in the past few years.

The man who stood out on Saturday was German based, Ned Zelic who played a blinder to steer Australia to victory.

His cracking goal was the best of the night and it got Australia back onto level terms after trailing for most of the first-half.

Zelic is one of our most experienced and skilled players and would be a valuable addition to an Olyroo squad which lacks experience on an international level which Zelic has.

Zelic was selected in our last Olympic campaign in Atlanta, which went horribly wrong, but he pulled out on the eve of the tournament.

Other players that Australia may look to for to represent US in the Olympics include Stan Lazaridis, who has been in great form for West Ham and striker Mark Viduka to name a few.

And on the management side of things, Roy Hodgson has stated during the week that he is looking for a challenge and that the Socceroo position is something that interests him.

Hodgson would be a great buy although the terms of a possible contract must be changed from that used for Terry Venables.

World Star captain, Jurgen Klinsmann was grateful to soccer Australia for his invitation to the game and said that he would love to play more friendlies as his Professional days are over.

The German ace announced that this would be his last ever game unless he receives another invitation to play in a friendly game.

The German striker was a part of Germany's win in the 1990 World Cup and was also a part of last years

German side who played so poorly in France.

After the game, Klinsmann acknowledged that Australia were the better side and that they deserved to win the game.

"We knew they would be very motivated. They had a lot of opportunities in the first half and we gave them a game for 65 to 70 minutes," said Klinsmann after the game.

1999 Ericsson National Soccer Awards



The Sydney Hilton was the venue for last Friday evening's Australian Soccer's 'Night Of Nights', the 1999 Annual Awards Dinner.

Who ever initiated the statement, "Nice guys never win, but always finish last", was off the mark as it was totally destroyed and proved such beliefs as being grossly erroneous. Well most certainly in the case of Australian Soccer.

David Mitchell, Angie Postecoglou, Michael Petkovic, Pablo Cardozo and Mile Sterjovski are just about the five nicest guys you'll ever want to meet in any sport, or walk of life, let alone Soccer.

Yet all five finished first in their respective categories in Australian Soccer.

Attending was the Federal Minister for Sport, Ms Jackie Kelly, in her opening speech, somewhat patronisingly 'informed' the audience of

By John Economos

almost 500, that 'Soccer is one of the fastest growing sports in Australia'.

The former Australian World Cup captain

Johnny Warren, later in the evening whilst making his speech, categorically corrected Ms Kelly as just what Soccer really is all about, when talking about the size of our code.

As with all such functions, Soccer's awards evening had its fair share of political speeches by various officials. So what's new?

What was stunning, yet most pleasing, was the fact that every single coach or player recipient of an award, in making his short acceptance speech, did so with a vast degree of clarity, sincerity, humbleness plus intelligence.

Intelligent, quality speeches, especially from the Mitchell, Postecoglou and Warren, left the 'professionals' for dead.



League Champions ... South Melbourne. From (l to r) Michael Petkovic, Peter Filopoulos, Angie Postecoglou, Georgia Loupos.

Coach of the Year Award was courageously won by Sydney United's David Mitchell. 'Big Mitch' received his award by Australia's 1974 World Cup coach Rale Rasic. It was easily the night's most popular, if not unanimous, choice.

An emotional Mitchell said, "I'm honoured and ecstatic the other coaches in the League thought that I deserved this award. It means so much to me and for this I thank them. My colleagues have acknowledged this fact by voting for me."

The quietly spoken, lanky former Australian international striker, went on to state to ABSW, "We battled very hard at United to finish first in the League and win the Minor Championship. I must thank all my players, everyone of them, for the honesty and full commitment they gave me throughout the entire season."

"I must acknowledge and thank greatly my assistant coach Laurie McKinna, for his loyal and rock solid support through a very difficult year," ended Mitchell.

And speaking of one Laurie McKinna, he simply stated to us, "Working with Mitch and all the great players at United, was easily the most enjoyable season I've ever had in my career, either as a player or coaching."

WARREN MEDAL WINNER 'The Player Of The Year Award' was won by Marconi captain and midfielder Brad Maloney. The former international received the prestigious 'Warren Medal' from the man himself, Johnny Warren, Australia's 1970 World Cup captain, and Ericsson's manager, Bill Zikou.

The Medal winner stated, "I'd like to thank all my teammates at Marconi and coach Frank Farina. This medal represents team work done by all at Marconi."

The Ericsson League's Top Goalscorer was taken out by Sydney Olympic's ace marksman, 26 year old Pablo Cardozo, who finished the season with 18 goals. The highly skilled Cardozo had just arrived back from the USA, barely in time to receive his trophy from John Kosmina, former Australian World Cup skipper. Cardozo told ABSW, "I regard it an honour being the season's top goalscorer. The wish of every striker."

"Last season I was leading the goal charts whilst with the Adelaide Sharks, but left for Austria to play for the remainder of the season with Rapid Vienna. I am pleased that I came back and was able to continue from where I left off. I'm very proud for my team Sydney Olympic, my family and for myself," Cardozo ended.

GOALKEEPER OF THE YEAR award was cleanly and firmly taken in both gloves by South Melbourne's reliable custodian, Michael Petkovic, who received his trophy from Soccer Australia Chairman, Mr Basil Scarsella.

Michael made sure the 'Goalkeeper's trophy remained in the illustrious Petkovic family, as his 26 year old brother, Jason, Adelaide City's international custodian, had won the award over the last two seasons.

UNDER 21 PLAYER OF THE YEAR 'The Pappasavos Medal' was taken out by Sydney United's dynamically talented striker, Mile Sterjovski.

The young United marksman received his award from Lazarus Pappasavos, son of the Late Sam Pappasavos, a former Chairman of the National Soccer League.

REFEREE OF THE YEAR AWARD was taken out for the second time by 28 year old referee, Simon Micallef who first won this award in 1997. Presenter was former World Cup captain Paul Wade.

Simon made his debut in the NSL at the tender age of 23.

ASSISTANT REFEREE AWARD again presented by Paul Wade, was taken out by 42 year old NSW referee, John Bowdler.

The reliable flagman had previously won this award in 1995 as well as in 1997 to complete a very rare hat-trick.

The Ericsson National Soccer League Championship Cup was presented to 1999 Grand Final Winners South Melbourne, and was accepted by a club Director as well as the young team coach, Angie Postecoglou.

The 33 year old, the Ericsson National Soccer League's youngest coach, who now has won back-to-back National Championships, as always, was gracious and most humble, electing to state to ABSW, "Winning this year's Grand Final was more difficult than last season. Believe me."

"I'm very proud and feel we are worthy Champions as every team this season was out after us from Day One being the current Champions. I honestly believe that every single team gave it everything when they played us."

Postecoglou, went on to add, "Winning the League Championship again was a lot more satisfying than last season's."

But whilst on stage, the always serious, matured young coach, wrapped up his speech by wisely mentioning: "As we (Souths) are now the candidate team to challenge to qualify for FIFA's World Club Championship next January, I'm fully aware of the great responsibility that lies on our shoulders to do well for Australia," ended Postecoglou.

The Fair Play Award bestowed annually to the team that during the season has been issued with the fewest cautions, was won by Adelaide City and accepted by coach Zoran Matic.



Minor League Champions... Sydney United. (l to r) Laurie McKinna, Tony Labbozzetta, David Mitchell, Velimir Kupresak and Ray Gerrie.



Coach of the Year ... David Mitchell(r) with Rale Rasic.



Player of the Year... from (l to r) Brad Maloney with Johnny Warren and Basil Scarsella and Bill Zikou from Ericsson.



U21 Player of the Year ... Mile Sterjovski(r) with Lazarus Pappasavos.



Goalkeeper of the Year ... Michael Petkovic(l) with Basil Scarsella.



Referee of the Year ... Simon Micallef(l) with Assistant Referee of the year, John Bowdler(r).



Top Goalscorer of the Year ... Pablo Cardozo(l) with John Kosmina.

Australian Features

SHOULD ROY BE OUR NEXT COACH?

Have Your Say ...

coach for the job of coaching a squad of Australia's best players that can be worth over \$100 million on the transfer market

when he travels to Europe and other overseas countries and the junior levels of National team coaching positions such as the Olyroos, Youth teams and



Roy Hodgson ... will this man be the new Socceroo coach. Only time will tell.

After reading a story in Thursday's Daily Telegraph (June 10) about coach Roy Hodgson being interested in the Australian coaching position, and also at a reasonable price, I reckon Basil Scarcella and other Soccer Australia officials would be mad not to employ him as the next Socceroo coach.

The paper mentioned he would do it for a third of the \$1.4 million plus package that Terry Venables cost

the World Cup finals in Japan and Korea), at least half of that money, or close to it, will come if we qualify for the finals in Japan and Korea.

If we miss out again, he misses out on nearly \$500,000 million.

Can't be fairer than that. While I am also in favour of our young local coaches getting a go at big time international coaching like David Mitchell and Angie Postecoglou, I think they would be suited to the junior

which sounds reasonable to me.

However, it must be an incentive package in favour of qualifying for the 2002 World Cup.

In other words if Terry Venables cost over \$2 million for his two year contract with Soccer Australia and Roy would do it for less than \$1 million for a 3 year contract (till

level's at this stage.

Apart from the lack of big time international experience in coaching, they also lack the media profile that Roy would have, as well as being over-ruled by the big name players from the European clubs.

I doubt whether David Mitchell or Angelo Postecoglou would get the full complete respect of our overseas based players who would earn ten times the amount that any of our local coaches would at the National coaching level.

Since the former chairman David Hill signed such a high profile coach, like Terry Venables, it makes it so much harder to go back down to a local



The Old, Raul Blanco(l) with the new, Roy Hodgson(r). Is this a changing of the guard?

collectively.

I think it would be very unfair to put either Mitchell or Postecoglou under such intimidating and immense pressure at this stage of their coaching experience or careers.

Perhaps as assistants coaches to Roy

Joey teams in future when Les Scheinflug and Raul Blanco retire or are sacked.

Dominic Scullino
NERANG QLD

The Two Muscateers?

By Melissa Muscat

When hardman Kevin Muscat was in town recently, Soccer Weekly reporter Melissa Muscat (no relation) was given the honourous task of interviewing the tough and talented Socceroo.

With a reputation of being one of the hard men in the Socceroos, Muscat's on field antics definitely do not reflect his off field nature.

Muscat is now one of many Australian's who apply there trade overseas, playing for Wolverhampton in England.

Kevin is in Australia for the FIFA Worlds Star clash and is caught up with him

only a matter of hours before the clash.

Melissa: Firstly Kevin, how have you settled in England?

Kevin: Well I've settled in after three years. The first year I was there I was living in London and now I'm in Telford which is just outside of Birmingham.

Obviously the climate is colder but you get used to it.

Melissa: How did your team Wolverhampton go this season?

Kevin: We started off well and then our manager got sacked just before Christmas.

Colin Lee took over and we only lost two games out of 22, so we had a pretty good season. We just missed out on making the play offs.

Melissa: When are you coming back to Australia to play?

Kevin: It's difficult to say. We (my wife and I) really like England now and we've settled in.

We've made new friends so we quite enjoy living there. I'd like to come back and play one day though because Australia gave me the opportunity, so I like to give something back.

Melissa: So how's the hand going? (Kevin recently needed surgery on a shattered bone.)

Kevin: I was at training and there was an accident. I shattered the bone just above my little finger.

I missed our games. I still have nine pins and a metal plate inside my hand and at first I had to wear a cast when I played, but it's OK now.

Melissa: So what's it like to be back playing in Australia?

Kevin: Coming back home is always brilliant. I had my dad, brother and sister here from Melbourne, they came to watch the game and to support me.

I haven't seen them for about four or five months. I back to the UK on Wednesday.

Melissa: OK the big question now Kevin, have you met the Spice Girls? They're pretty big here with Posh Spice marrying David Beckham.

Kevin: Definitely not. They're pretty big in England as well but they're mainly liked



The Two Muscateers... Kevin with Melissa during last week's Socceroo lunch.

by the younger audience.

Melissa: Well Good luck Kevin, I'm sure you'll do us all proud, you always do.

Have a safe trip back and thankyou for your time.

Kevin: You're welcome.

On behalf of the 'ABSW', we would like to wish Kevin and his wife all the best as they are expecting a baby around mid September.

We also hope to see him here in July when the Socceroos take on Manchester United.



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Australian Features

Have Your Say ...

Dear Sir,

So the Grand Final showpiece of Australian Soccer was fought out between the Greeks and Croats. What a joke!!

With everything on display that nationalistic hatred represents, Australian Soccer once again shoots itself in the foot!

Clubs like Sydney United and the Adelaide Sharks are holding back the great game in this country something cronic.

If they don't have the common sense, or good graces, to allow viable, broad-based clubs to replace them then Soccer Australia must wield the big axe — and now!

For all David Hill's detractors, he did more good for the Australian game in a couple of

years that these ethocentric club administrators will ever do.

Bob Shepherd,
Taringa QLD

Dear Sir,

I was appalled and insulted that out of all the letters you received you chose to print Mr. Kunz's venomous diatribe. No guessing as to what your agenda is.



As I read Mr. Kunz's letter, (out loud for better effect), I started to picture him standing on a soap box, draped in the Australian flag, with one hand on his heart and the other holding a sword calling upon Soccer Australia to cut down this anti-christ of soccer.

As if the demise of Sydney United will herald a new dawn for soccer in Australia. Ha!

I don't know why Mr. Kunz has directed his criticism and animosity only towards United. It is obviously something personal.

However, Mr. Kunz, please explain why then Marconi Stadium, Brandon Park, Belmore and Bruce Stadium are not overflowing with passionate soccer fans?

There are no terrorists intimidating and threatening.

No flares and explosive devices to scare little children and by the way Mr. Kunz, you forgot to mention that we also snatch old ladies' handbags.

Explain why 11,000 spectators didn't fear for their lives when United played South Melbourne at Edensor Park recently.

Heroes every one of them! The

vast majority of United's supporters have had "love and best wishes in their hearts for our game" for over forty years.

We were there when it wasn't fashionable to follow soccer, when there weren't any fancy marketing men or big money. Where Mr. Kunz were your genuine supporters then? Most importantly which team produced a plethora of fine players for all the national teams.

The answer is not important when bigotry and jealousy get in the way of facts.

Maybe Mr. Kunz, in your next journalistic endeavour you'll do an expose' on the other 99.5% of United's fans and please make it factual not fictional.

M.Susic
Penshurst NSW



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Australian Features



FRANK JURIC

FORTUNA DUSSELDORF - GERMAN SECOND Division

Diegos: "There are a growing number of Aussies in Germany playing soccer. Ned Zelic, Paul Agostino, Robert Middleby and Joe Simunic to name a few. Do you ever invite them around to your place for a Frank Juric 'Vegemite and Victoria Bitter' food and beer fest?"

Juric: "Ned and Paul are a six hour drive away in Munich, so it's not often that they gate crash my place. Robert Middleby is only half an hour away. The last time I got in contact with him was probably the last time we played against each other, but we try and keep in touch over the phone."

"I keep in touch with a lot of the boys playing in Holland such as Zeljko Kalac, Ante Milicic, and Joe Bacak. They actually come over quite often because Dusseldorf is renowned for its nightclubs and beautiful women."

Diegos: "Frank, it sounds like you've formed your very own Aussie soccer Rat Pack over there. Tell us a little about the German girls — have you got a German girlfriend and is she a Claudia Schiffer look a like?"

Juric: "Well actually Claudia lives down the road from me, so I see her all the time."

Diegos: "Have you used the sure fire 'Four Diego' method of meeting supermodels — going over to her place and asking for a cup of sugar?"

Juric: "Actually she comes over to me — she knows me now!"

Diegos: "So she's got a semi naked poster of Frank Juric in a Soccerroo top, hanging over her bed head?"

Juric: "I'd like to think that that's true."

HAYDEN FOXE

SANFRECCE HIROSHIMA - JAPANESE J LEAGUE

Diegos: "You made your debut for the Soccerroos against the United States on a ground that you described at the time, as being comparable to some of the backyard paddocks that you played on as a kid."

What was it like playing the Yanks on your debut, and did Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky play any part in the pre-game entertainment?"

Foxe: "It was really great. I've been waiting a long time to get my first game with the national team. I was hoping to play a few years ago but injuries hampered my progress. As far as Bill and Monica are concerned well... unfortunately Raul wouldn't let us watch that type of entertainment before a match anyway."

Diegos: "One of the biggest fantasies dreamt about by young Aussie soccer players, along with of course, fantasizing that one day Elle McPherson will be their swimming instructor, is that they will be picked up by a European mega club."

"We don't know whether you were taught to swim by Elle, but we do know that Ajax Amsterdam, a club renowned for having possibly the best youth development program in the world, recruited you as a youngster. How did their interest in you come about and what is it about their program that makes it so highly regarded?"

Foxe: "Hey I had that Elle fantasy too but sadly when I realised that it was only a dream, I decided to throw myself into soccer. Ajax recruit kids as young as five all the way up to the first team, and teach them the exact same system and style of play."



Aloisi... didn't get a chance to give fellow Aussie, Stan Lazaridis a wedgy.

JOHN ALOISI

COVENTRY City - English Premier LEAGUE

"Whatever the first team is being taught, the young kids are also being taught. I went there straight from the Australian Institute of Sport for a month's trial and I was lucky enough to have done well."

"They liked what they saw in me as a player and I ended up staying there for 18 months. This gave me a terrific grounding in the game, and I can honestly say that I've never been anywhere like it since."

VINCE GRELLA

EMPOLI - Italy Serie A

Diegos: "Your first hit-out for Italian club, Empoli was against the mighty Juventus in front of 45,000 people at the Stadio Del Alpi, and you marked none other than, France's World Cup hero, Zinedine Zidane."

"We just want to know, did you welcome him with a good old fashion Springvale City tackle from behind and say 'Hi, I'm Vince Grella from Australia, who are you?'"

Grella: "No none of that. To tell you the truth, I didn't get near him. He was that quick. It was as though he was born on another planet."

"He was just a freak. It was a weird experience because initially I wasn't expecting to play. One of our midfielders got dropped from the team because of disciplinary reasons and I subsequently came on to the bench."

"Then during the game one of our midfielders went up for a header with Deshamps from Juventus, and dislocated his jaw, so I came straight on and just did my job. It happened so quick that I didn't even stop to think that I was about to play against Juventus and Zidane. We went on to get a 0-0 draw, which was a big result for us. I was ecstatic after the game as you would imagine."

Diegos: "Now for some cultural questions. How is the 'Ciao Bella, I'm Vince Grella' line working with the young Italian girls and how are you fitting in with the Italian lifestyle?"

Grella: "I've haven't summoned up enough courage to use the 'Four Diegos' pick up line yet. The Italian lifestyle, on the other hand, is phenomenal. It's superb, especially if you're a footballer."

Diegos: "Most Adelaide born 22 year old dudes of Italian descent make a career out of disco dancing at the local night club and cruising in their hotted up Monaro GTS."

"You instead decided that there has to be more to life than dancing to Tina Turner's 'Nutbush City Limits' and so you set about forging trailblazing career as an overseas soccer professional."

"In a relatively short time, you have played and scored in Italy's Serie A and the English Premiership, and are gaining a reputation as a goal scorer of the highest quality. Do you sometimes lay awake at night wondering whether this is all true?"

Aloisi: "Not really because I put a lot of hard work into it. Whatever I get out of it, I know I've deserved. It hasn't been easy. I left home before I turned 17 to go to Belgium and as you know, at that age, 17 year olds are still trying to get into the discos in Adelaide. I wasn't any good at dancing anyway, so I had to pursue a career in soccer."

Diegos: "Stan Lazaridis' team, West Ham, played Coventry just after Christmas. Did you and Stan

cross paths on the pitch, and was there time to give Stan a traditional aussie 'wedgy or fuzz nut' welcome?"

Aloisi: "Actually I did start that game, but I didn't get a chance to give Stan a wedgy. It would've been something I would've loved to do though."

"We had a chat just before the kick off and during the game a little bit, but I was trying to concentrate because it was the first game I started in so I couldn't really talk that much."

STAN LAZARIDIS

WEST HAM - English Premier LEAGUE

Diegos: "Recently in the English 'Match of the Day' weekly highlights package on SBS TV, the Diegos were cheering you on as you twinkle toed past three Arsenal defenders and threaded and incisive through ball to your team mate, Ian Wright in a goal-scoring position."

"He proceeded to miss the chance and the Hammers lost the London derby 1-0. Now that you're one of the stars of the team, we want to know how you handle those situations."

Do you let him have it in the change rooms after the game, do you back-stab him to your other team mates or do you just give him a hug of sympathy in the showers and say better luck next time?"

Lazaridis: "When you lose a game, you look back and try to work out where you could've got a point from or where you could've won the game. When you look back at that game, that was our best chance of the game."

"So you might ask your teammate the question in a polite sort of a way, querying what went wrong. Ian Wright is a class player. He scores and misses a lot of goals."

"It's frustrating from my point of view, if you're a creator because you want to see your good work converted to goals. It makes you look good and earns the team valuable points as well. I wouldn't hug him in the showers ever, let alone after he has missed a goal."

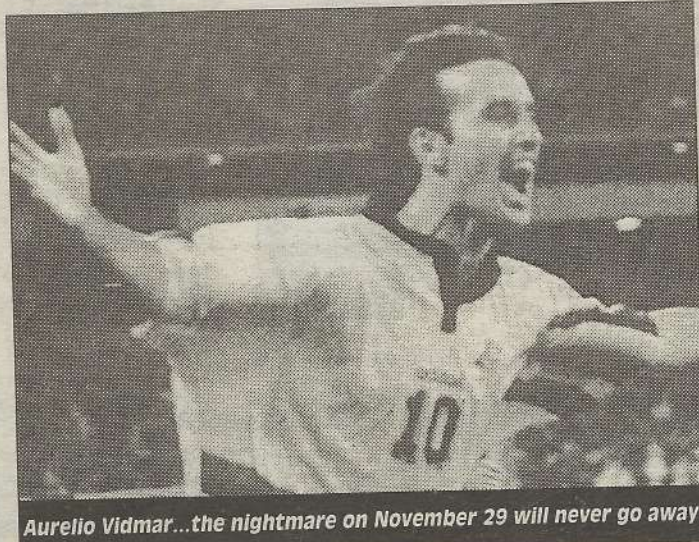
AURELIO VIDMAR

SANFRECCE HIROSHIMA - JAPANESE J LEAGUE

Diegos: "I want to take you back to Australian Soccer's Nightmare on Elm Street 5 — the MCG November 1997. You started in blistering form, helping to make Harry Kewell's opener in the first half and scoring what seemed like the winner in the second half to make it 2-0."

"There were times in that electrifying opening 30 minutes, where Ahnadreza Abedzaden (Known as the Freddie Kruger of world soccer by the Diegos), the Iranian goalkeeper, denied you on a number of occasions."

"Do you still have recurring nightmares, asking yourself why you didn't put the ball into the other corner or choosing to blast it rather than place it?"



Aurelio Vidmar...the nightmare on November 29 will never go away.

Vidmar: "I was hoping you wouldn't raise the events of that night. I can't say I've had recurring nightmares even though, the two or three days after were very hard for everyone."

"During the game I just did what I would always do when I'm faced with a one on one with a goal keeper, it's just that, on a number of occasions in that game, he read me."



David Zdrilic...he will let us all know when he puts one past fellow Aussie, Frank Juric.

"I kept plugging away and still worked my way into some good positions. I was proud that I didn't drop my head even though I missed a number of opportunities. Some people blame the crazy spectator who jumped the fence, while others say that Terry (Venables) should have made better changes. It was just a huge disappointment. I haven't watched the game since and don't think I ever will."

DAVID ZDRILIC

SSV ULM - GERMAN SECOND Division

Diegos: "A former Diego 'Guest of the Week', Frank Juric, who is the goalkeeper for Fortuna Dusseldorf, also plays in the German second division. When you clash in competition does it bring back memories of the old Sydney United and Melbourne Knights rivalry, and if you do slam one past him will you go up and give him a hug and a kiss or just a good old aussie raspberry?"

Zdrilic: "We have actually met once on the field but I didn't score against him. I'm sure, if we meet again and I put one away, I'll let him know about it. I think I'll remind him of the good old-days downunder. I'm sure, if he saves one of my shots he'll have a few words to say. Hopefully next time I can put one past him so I can give him a bit of cheek."

NED ZELIC

TSV 1860 MUNICH - GERMAN Bundesliga

Diegos: "When asked, many years ago, why you didn't make yourself available to play for Australia during the Atlanta Olympics, you were quoted as saying, 'that playing for Australia doesn't always put the Coco Pops on the table'."

"Firstly, what are the Coco pops like in Germany and secondly, can you give us an idea how difficult it is for an overseas-based Australian player, to make himself available to play for the Soccerroos regularly?"

Zelic: "Well, I'm still an avid fan of Coco Pops. I mix them with some Frosties and have them every morning. It's a great start to the day."

Australian Features

ABROAD ADVENTURE



"Back at the time you're referring to, I had just signed for Auxerre in France, and the club's coach put me under a lot of pressure not to go to the Olympics. I was in a situation where I had to basically make a decision, club or country."

"The fact that I'd already been to the Olympics in Barcelona, helped me make my decision. In hindsight, after being injured and out of the team for so long, I now regret not going to the Olympics."

"These are the decisions you have to make and unfortunately, sometimes things don't turn out as you would like them to."

Diegos: "Your goal against Holland in the Olympic qualifiers in 1992, is regarded, with Jimmy Mackay's cracker, that got Australia to the World Cup in 1974, and the Four Diegos winner against the Cook Island Bus Company on our unofficial Contiki Oceania tour in 1995, as the greatest goal scored by an Australian in international competition."

"During your low times in recent years, did you ever go to your video collection and slip on that game to pep you up a bit? What did that goal do for your career at the time?"

Zelic: "Well basically that game secured a contract for me with Dortmund. That goal in the end, got Australia to the Olympics. I have watched the game a few times here and there, it brings back some great memories."

Diegos: "Ned we want to be the first reporters ever to ask you this question. Did you mean to shoot at goal or was it a cross gone wrong when you scored the winner in that game?"

Zelic: "Unfortunately for you guys, you don't get the scoop — I had to answer that question about 100 times after it happened. I really did mean to shoot. I remember that I did have the option to cross it to one of our strikers or to go for goal. I went for goal and luckily for me it worked out."

"I know there are a lot of people out there who believe that it was a cross gone wrong but I assure everyone, for the 104th time, that I did mean to score."

Diegos: "You have been the only Australian player to ever be selected to play for a FIFA All-Star team. Who have been some of the players that you've played with in these games and how did they cope with the aussie 'Dencorub on the jock strap' prank in the dressing before the game?"

Zelic: "There were quite a few players — Lothar Matthaus, Jurgen Klinsman, George Weah, Redondo and numerous other stars. Maradona was supposed to turn up as well. He was one of my boyhood heroes but he didn't rock up in the end, which was disappointing."

"Perhaps he had heard of the 'Dencorub on the jock strap' prank and decided he wasn't going to take the risk."

MARK SCHWARZER

Middlesbrough - English Premier League

Diegos: "Back in 1993, in the cut throat World Cup qualifier against Canada, it seemed that your winning penalty shoot out save and subsequent hot and spicy kiss from teammate, Aurelio Vidmar, triggered a professional career overseas."

"Looking back, was it the save against Canada or Aurelio's kiss that did it for you?"

Schwarzer: "It was a bit of both, I must say. The save obviously did help me but the kiss inspired me."

JOHN FILAN

Blackburn Rovers - English Premier League

Diegos: "Mark Bosnich has had a couple of well publicized spats with English supporters behind his goal over the years. What is the funniest thing opposition supporters have said to you and have you thought about hitting them with the age old, Basil Fawlty, Nazi salute to get them off your back?"

Filan: "After seeing what Bosnich copped at Spurs and in the media, I've kept the old Nazi salute well and truly tucked away. The weirdest experience I've ever had was when I first signed at Blackburn."

"A lady came in at one of the club's signing sessions and got so excited that she took off her false leg and wanted me to sign it. The only problem was that it still had a shoe and stocking on it. You get used to some weird things over here."

Diegos: "You picked up the Wilkinson Sword Player of the Week award for your display against Aston Villa during the season. How are the golden disposable razors going and do you think it was your best performance thus far?"

Filan: "In terms of the razors, I don't really shave that often. It did go well at Aston Villa though. It was a great team performance and our first win away from home for the season. On that side of it we were very happy."

"The Wilkinson Sword prize they gave me was a bag. I don't know what they're trying to say by giving a goalkeeper a bag, but I'll take it anyway."

Diegos: "We Diegos nearly cried when you literally fell on your head whilst going for a high ball against Sunderland in the FA cup. We were thinking the worst when you were stretchered from the park wearing a neck brace. Miraculously you played the next week. Was the injury as serious as it looked and did you employ the services of Glenn Hoddle's faith healer, Eileen Drewery to get you right so quickly?"

Filan: "Getting Hoddle's faith healer may well have been a good option at the time because I certainly didn't feel too good after I took that spill. When the physio came out and realised that I had fallen on my head, he wasn't as worried as usual because I have been known as being a bit of a thick-head in the past. Thinking back, in that respect, it was probably a good thing that I did go in head first."

TONY VIDMAR

Glasgow Rangers - Scottish Premier League

Diegos: "The Four Diegos Scottish correspondent, Jimmy Diego, tells us you scored against Hamilton Academicals in the Scottish FA Cup. It was your first goal for the club and no doubt a special moment for you. How did you celebrate the goal? Did you slip on a kilt and play an imaginary bagpipe around the corner flag to get into the Scottish groove of goal celebration?"

Vidmar: "Yes I actually slipped on the kilt for the occasion. I made sure the public got a glimpse of what is under an aussies' kilt. I don't know whether they appreciated the sight though."

"It was my first goal for the club. It's been a long time coming. It came from a corner and I think the player marking me had little idea of what he was doing. It just hit me on the head and I was fortunate that it went in."

DANNY TIATTO

Manchester City - English Second Division

Diegos: "In Manchester it's the United boys that seem to be the ones who get to go out with the Spice Girls, drive flashy cars and make obscene amounts of money. The City boys on the other hand, appear to do it tough, without as much glamour, trappings and having little or no chance with the Spice Girls. What's it like in Manchester when you're playing for Manchester City rather than United?"

Tiatto: "Well that's very much the perception people have about Manchester City around the world but if you spend time in Manchester you'll realise that this is not the case."

"The majority of 'City' supporters live in Manchester whereas many of the 'United' supporters come from outside the city. They tend to be the people who choose United because they are a winning team."

"It's really weird. It seems that everyone living in Manchester hates Manchester United, and would rather follow 'City'. That unfortunately doesn't stop the Spice Girls going out with them rather than us though."

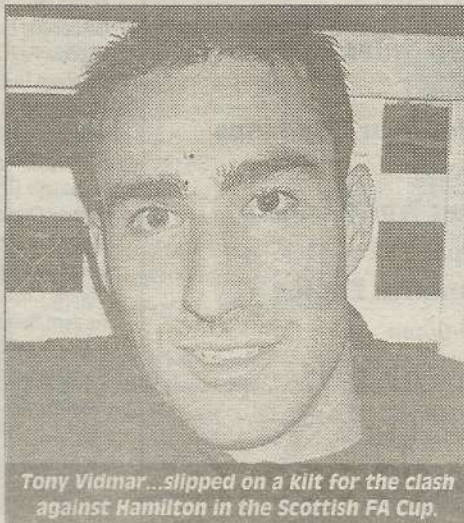
Diegos: "A huge supporter of Manchester City is the rock band 'Oasis', of course fronted by the controversial and often tempestuous, Noel Gallagher."

"Have you had the pleasure of meeting the band and given your aggressive nature on the park, has Noel ever asked you to join the band and perhaps add a little more aggro to their press conferences?"

Tiatto: "The team haven't met him yet but we are aware that he comes to most of our games. I think I'll steer clear of the band though because I don't like their music. We get free tickets to their concerts but I must admit there aren't too many Manchester City players who are keen to attend."

Diegos: "Every Aussie kid's dream is to earn thousands of pounds a week playing soccer professionally overseas. Can you become financially secure playing in the Second division in England and when you retire, will we see you wearing diamond rings, gold chains, an open neck body shirt smoking a big fat cigar, cruising down Lygon street in a custom made Danny Tiatto Porsche?"

Tiatto: "Manchester City is a big club in England and the financial part of it, I must admit, is great. It's a terrific way to earn a living, especially in the UK. When I get home, as long as I live by the beach and go surfing"



Tony Vidmar...slipped on a kilt for the clash against Hamilton in the Scottish FA Cup.

everyday, I'll be happy. Bell's Beach is just the place I'd like to be."

NICK RIZZO

Crystal Palace - English First Division

Diegos: "The news this season is that your club, Crystal Palace is in the hands of an administrator. Is that worrisome for you and have you been engulfed by the sudden urge to fly back to the club and collect your valuables from your club locker, before the receivers sell them?"

Rizzo: "To tell you the truth I'm not sure what's happening. I haven't been able to get a hold of the chairman. As you can imagine he'd be pretty busy right now. I've heard that an administrator has been installed so the club may well be going into liquidation. I feel I've got to try and get in contact with someone so that I can find out what the hell is going on."

Diegos: "So you haven't had to resort to washing your own jock straps?"

Rizzo: "No not yet, I don't think that its got that bad."



Nick Rizzo hasn't had to resort to washing his own jock straps.

Diegos: "Under Venables, Palace almost became a home away from home for Aussie soccer players. At one stage it seemed that the club was going to change its name to 'Crystal Palace Aussie Backpackers and Hitchhikers Downunder'."

"Other than a VB can floating in the Gatorade bucket and 'Cold Chisel' blaring in the player's meditation sessions, what other evidence is there that the club is infested with Aussies?"

Rizzo: "There are a couple more players in the youth team and the Crystal Palace chairman owns a big slice of the Northern Spirit. I suppose that's a bit more evidence. It seems that he likes everything Australian. One correction though — unfortunately there are no VB cans floating in the Gatorade."

Diegos: "Our resident sports physiotherapist, Dr. Groin, tells us that the English are a little behind the Aussies when it comes to the treatment of sports injuries. Was it the lobotomy your English club doctor was attempting to give you when treating your bad knee, that compelled you to return home and seek Aussie medical advice?"

Rizzo: "I had a scan and the English doctors said that I didn't need an operation, so I asked permission to come home. When I got home I went to see a specialist. He looked at me and asked 'What the hell is that?' I was told that the English doctors had given me the wrong knee brace."

"Apparently it was the brace that you wear when you come back to play. So my Aussie specialist replaced the brace with the correct one and instead of being out for three months as originally estimated, I've been told that I'll be only out for two months, which makes me feel a lot better."

continued next week

NSW SUPER LEAGUE

EASTS SECURE A RARE WIN

It was a rare quiet weekend in Super League, with it originally being left free.

Despite that though, three games were played, all of them re-arranged from previously washed-out games.

On Sunday Eastern Suburbs secured a rare win after defeating Ryde City 1-0 at Wentworth Park.

Peter Pullicino, who scored goals with a flurry at the start of the season but hasn't netted for some time, scored after 67 minutes in what could be a vital win for the Wanderers. Even better for their point of view was that they moved a point clear of the Central Coast, who went down 2-0 at home to the Parramatta Eagles.

Striker Adam Anderson notched his ninth of the season for the Eagles and the youngster only came into the side nearly halfway through the season.

Defender Paul O'Grady sealed the

points for the Eagles, with a goal after 54 minutes.

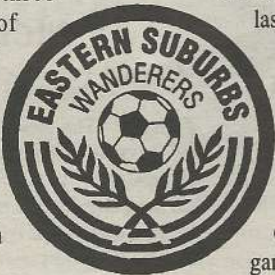
It looks like the fate of the two bottom clubs could come down to the very last game of the season, when the Coasties take on Eastern Suburbs.

The Eagles meantime went back into fourth, although Fairfield could go above them depending on the result of Monday's game.

The Macarthur Rams took on the Fairfield Bulls yesterday (Monday) looking for a win to keep them clear in second place. The Rams though have been rocked by the shock resignation of coach Casey de Bruin, so stand-in Martin Bourke, who is being assisted by Richard Lloyd and John Crawley, will be looking

to fire his charges up.

With three rounds to go and all issues still to be decided, it looks like being a fascinating last three rounds in the 1999 Super League campaign!



NSW SOCCER FEDERATION SUPER LEAGUE

ROUND



20

Saturday 19th June
Central Coast v Fairfield Bulls

Plum Park, 6:00pm

Sunday 20th June
Macarthur Rams v Eastern Suburbs

Lynwood Park, 3:00pm

Blacktown City Demons v Bankstown City Lions
Gabbie Stadium, 3:00pm

Leichhardt Tigers v Bonnyrigg White Eagles
Lambert Park, 3:00pm

Sutherland Sharks v Parramatta Eagles
Seymour Shaw Field, 3:00pm

Ryde City v Canterbury Marrickville
Wentworth Park, 3:00pm

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COMBINED LEAGUE

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	DIF	PTS
Blacktown City Demons	72	54	7	11	203	59	144	169
Sydney Olympic	68	44	6	18	201	96	105	138
Gladesville Hornsby Assoc	73	41	14	18	168	78	90	137
Wollongong Wolves	72	39	11	22	139	101	38	128
Marconi Fairfield	72	39	10	23	148	97	51	127
Newcastle Breakers	64	40	4	20	136	74	62	124
Southern Districts	72	36	13	23	146	119	27	121
Leichhardt Tigers	68	35	6	27	122	95	27	111
Sydney United	68	31	11	26	108	102	6	104
Sutherland Sharks	72	28	16	28	116	106	10	100
Parramatta Eagles	64	26	11	27	112	86	26	89
Macarthur Rams	72	21	14	37	79	116	-37	77
Central Coast	69	15	8	46	54	178	-124	53
Manly Warringah Dolphins	72	13	9	50	66	176	-110	48
Southern Branch	72	13	7	52	55	194	-139	46
Eastern Suburbs	72	9	7	56	58	234	-176	34

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE

ROUND 18

	G/13	G/14	G/15	G/16
Leichhardt Tigers v Sydney Utd	5-0	0-4	2-4	0-1
P'matta Eagles v Gladesville Hornsby	3-3	1-4	1-3	2-0
Macarthur Rams v Eastern Subs	2-1	4-0	0-2	5-2
Southern Districts v Marconi Fairfield	1-2	3-3	2-1	0-5
N'castle Breakers v Sutherland Sharks	1-0	0-1	3-0	2-1
Central Coast v Manly Warringah	1-1	1-0	2-2	1-0
Blacktown City v Southern Branch	5-0	5-0	3-0	3-0
Sydney Olympic v W'gong Wolves	6-3	8-2	2-0	4-2

UNDER 13

	P	W	D	L	F	A	DIF	PTS
Blacktown City Demons	18	17	1	0	83	5	78	52
Wollongong Wolves	18	11	4	3	45	24	21	37
Sydney Olympic	17	11	1	5	52	26	26	34
Newcastle Breakers	16	11	1	4	31	14	17	34
Gladesville Hornsby Assoc	18	9	5	4	31	24	7	32
Parramatta Eagles	16	9	3	4	37	17	20	30
Leichhardt Tigers	17	9	3	5	35	24	11	30
Marconi Fairfield	18	8	3	7	30	29	1	27
Southern Districts	18	8	2	8	28	34	-6	26
Sutherland Sharks	18	5	5	8	18	26	-8	20
Macarthur Rams	18	4	6	8	14	24	-10	18
Southern Branch	18	4	5	9	18	38	-20	17
Manly Warringah Dolphins	18	3	3	12	16	47	-31	12
Eastern Suburbs	18	2	3	13	12	45	-33	9
Central Coast	17	2	3	12	10	56	-46	9
Sydney United	17	2	2	13	11	38	-27	8

UNDER 14

	P	W	D	L	F	A	DIF	PTS
Sydney Olympic	17	12	1	4	62	18	44	37
Sydney United	17	11	4	2	41	18	23	37
Gladesville Hornsby Assoc	18	11	3	4	48	20	28	36
Southern Districts	18	10	6	2	41	20	21	36
Blacktown City Demons	18	11	2	5	31	19	12	35
Wollongong Wolves	18	10	1	7	37	35	2	31
Sutherland Sharks	18	9	3	6	23	20	3	30
Marconi Fairfield	18	9	2	7	41	32	9	29
Newcastle Breakers	16	9	0	7	26	23	3	27
Leichhardt Tigers	17	8	0	9	27	24	3	24
Macarthur Rams	18	7	3	8	21	19	2	24
Parramatta Eagles	16	6	1	9	23	28	-5	19
Southern Branch	18	6	1	11	18	47	-29	19
Central Coast	17	3	0	14	12	52	-40	9
Manly Warringah Dolphins	18	1	3	14	11	38	-27	6
Eastern Suburbs	18	1	2	15	16	65	-49	5

UNDER 15

	P	W	D	L	F	A	DIF	PTS
Blacktown City Demons	18	16	0	2	51	12	39	48
Gladesville Hornsby Assoc	18	14	3	1	59	8	51	45
Marconi Fairfield	18	13	3	2	47	11	36	42
Southern Districts	18	12	2	4	45	19	26	38
Sutherland Sharks	18	8	5	5	36	24	12	29
Wollongong Wolves	18	8	5	5	29	22	7	29
Sydney United	17	8	4	5	26	22	3	28
Newcastle Breakers	16	8	2	6	37	19	18	26
Sydney Olympic	17	8	1	8	35	34	1	25
Macarthur Rams	18	6	2	10	22	38	-16	20
Leichhardt Tigers	17	5	2	10	27	36	-9	17
Central Coast	17	4	4	9	17	39	-22	16
Eastern Suburbs	18	4	2	12	13	54	-41	14
Manly Warringah Dolphins	18	3	2	13	15	50	-35	11
Parramatta Eagles	16	1	6	9	13	31	-18	9
Southern Branch	18	0	1	17	7	59	-52	1

UNDER 16

	P	W	D	L	F	A	DIF	PTS
Sydney Olympic	17	13	3	1	52	18	34	42
Leichhardt Tigers	17	13	1	3	33	11	22	40
Newcastle Breakers	16	12	1	3	42	18	24	37

Blacktown City Demons	18	10	4	4	38	23	15	34
Parramatta Eagles	16	10	1	5	39	10	29	31
Wollongong Wolves	18	10	1	7	28	20	8	31
Sydney United	17	10	1	6	31	24	7	31
Marconi Fairfield	18	9	2	7	30	25	5	29
Gladesville Hornsby Assoc	19	7	3	9	30	26	4	24
Sutherland Sharks	18	6	3	9	39	36	2	21
Southern Districts	18	6	3	9	32	46	-14	21
Central Coast	18	6	1	11	15	31	-16	19
Manly Warringah Dolphins	18	6	1	11	24	41	-17	19
Macarthur Rams	18	4	3	11	22	35	-13	15
Southern Branch	18	3	0	15	12	50	-38	9
Eastern Suburbs	18	2	0	16	17	70	-53	6

DIVISION ONE YOUTH LEAGUE

ROUND 15

	G/13	G/14	G/15	G/16
Canterbury M'ville v Illawarra Lions	0-10	1-4	0-5	0-6
Canterbury Assoc v Bankstown Assoc	0-5	0-0	0-0	0-2
Stanmore Hawks v Ryde City	0-0	1-3	2-0	0-3
Penrith Panthers v AC United	0-1	0-3	0-1	0-2
Rockdale City Suns v Blacktown Assocw/o		w/o	w/o	w/o
Fairfield Bulls v St George	0-4	0-3	3-0	1-1
Hills United v Bonnyrigg WE	1-0	0-3	1-1	0-0

UNDER 13

	P	W	D	L	F	A	DIF	PTS
Illawarra Lions	14	13	1	0	61	5	56	40
Bankstown Association	15	12	2	1	58	18	40	38
AC United	15	11	1	3	50	17	33	34
Blacktown Association	14	9	3	2	35	15	20	30
St George	13	9	1	3	42	18	24	28
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	16	6	6	4	30	19	11	24
Hills United	15	7	1	7	20	17	3	22
Ryde City	15	6	3	6	23	18	5	21
Rockdale City Suns	14	7	0	7	18	24	-6	21
Penrith Panthers	15	5	2	8	27	21	6	17
Stanmore Hawks	15	4	1	10	12	24	-12	13
Canterbury Marrickville	15	2	0	13	10	88	-78	6
Canterbury Association	15	1	1	13	11	40	-29	4
Fairfield Bulls	15	0	0	15	7	80	-73	0

UNDER 14

	P	W	D	L	F	A	DIF	PTS
Ryde City	15	13	1	1	41	8	33	40
AC United	15	10	3	2	37	11	26	33
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	15	10	2	3	33	20	13	32
St George	14	9	0	5	26	12	14	27
Penrith Panthers	15	7	4	4	26	21	5	25
Illawarra Lions	14	5	4	5	20	22	-2	19
Hills United	15	5	3	7	30	27	3	18
Bankstown Association	15	5	3	7	19	19	0	18
Stanmore Hawks	15	5	3	7	20	24	-4	18
Canterbury Association	15	5	3	7	13	20	-7	18
Rockdale City Suns	14	4	4	6	9	16	-7	16
Blacktown Association	14	3	5	6	15	17	-2	14
Canterbury Marrickville	15	2	1	12	12	49	-37	7
Fairfield Bulls	15	1	2	12	7	42	-35	5

UNDER 15

	P	W	D	L	F	A	DIF	PTS
AC United	15	13	1	1	33	7	26	40
Bankstown Association	15	10	1	4	29	12	17	31
Hills United	15	9	2	4	34	15	19	29
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	15	9	2	4	34	22	12	29
Ryde City	15	8	2	5	27	13	14	26
Penrith Panthers	15	8	2	5	29	17	12	26
Illawarra Lions	14	7	3	4	32	18	14	24
Stanmore Hawks	15	7	3	5	27	24	3	24
Blacktown Association	14	5	5	4	26	19	7	20
Fairfield Bulls	14	4	2	8	19	44	-25	14
St George	14	3	2	9	14	31	-17	11
Canterbury Marrickville	14	2	1	11	12	41	-29	7
Canterbury Association	16	1	3	12	13	38	-25	6
Rockdale City Suns	13	1	1	11	14	42	-28	4

SOCCER WOMAN

WITH JANENE MAR IN CANBERRA

YOUNG MATILDAS BEAT CANADA

AUSTRALIA 3
Alicia Ferguson 9, Sharon Black 45, 57
CANADA 1
Isabelle Harvey 24

A young Matildas combination proved too strong for Canada, winning 3-1 last Thursday morning (Australian time) at Centennial Park Stadium in Etobicoke near Toronto.

In this the third of the Matildas' four warm-up games, National Coach Greg Brown continued to juggle the team formation, and on this occasion, fielded those players who had seen less match time to date, making for a very young and relatively inexperienced lineup.

They did not disappoint, pressing hard for starting selection in the World Cup itself.

The match was also the first on tour for Lisa Casagrande and Dianne Alagich, both returning from injury, and in fact the first full international for Alagich since March 1996 when she suffered a long-term knee

injury. Amy Wilson celebrated her nineteenth birthday with a starting position in midfield.

Australia were commanding from start to finish, displaying a solid and controlled performance despite some less than satisfactory refereeing.

The Matildas were denied a certain penalty when striker Cheryl Salisbury was upended in the box, leaving even Canadian coach Neil Turnbull apologetic for the officiating.

The Matildas were rewarded with the early lead, striker Alicia Ferguson ramming home a Sharon Black cross from the left after just nine minutes, and a goal to surely lift the confidence of the young Queenslander.

Canada then replied with the equaliser

midway through the first half through forward Isabelle Harvey.

Black then restored the Matildas' lead right on the stroke of half-time, showing class and composure to finish with a well-placed strike past the keeper.

The second half was a continuation of the first, Australia working in harmony and creating more chances on goal.

Canadian sensation Charmaine Hooper was kept relatively quiet following her goalscoring feats against both the USA and Brazil earlier in the week.

Midfielder Black capped a fine performance with her second goal to seal Australia's deserved 3-1 win, this time a sublime chip over the keeper's head twelve minutes after the break.

Best for Australia were Black, defender Alagich, and Joanne Peters in midfield

coming in off the bench. The towering Salisbury also created plenty of havoc for the Canadian defence in her new role up front.

The win was Australia's first in these warm-up matches, going down 4-0 to Olympic gold medallists USA followed by a 3-1 loss to Brazil.

"Today was an improved performance — we are converting the chances we're making," said Brown.

"It was encouraging to see Di Alagich and Lisa Casagrande come through alright after injury. We had three 17-year-olds on the field at the end, all contributing well. They will be a factor in the World Cup."

Australia: Wheeler, Alagich, Cooper, Swaffer, Taylor, Black (Golebiowski 65), Forman (Peters 46), Wilson (Hepperlin 57), Casagrande (Iannotta 50), Salisbury, Ferguson.



Alicia Ferguson ... scored Australia's first goal in the 3-1 win over Canada.

DISAPPOINTING END TO WARM-UPS

CANADA 2
Charmaine Hooper 46, Andrea Neil 55
AUSTRALIA 0

The Matildas put on a disappointing display to go down 2-0 to Canada last Sunday morning (Aust time) in Toronto, the last of their warm-up games, a week before the World Cup kicks off in the USA.

Injuries to fullback Bridgette Starr and striker Alicia Ferguson added to the

Matildas' woes, the pair unlikely to be available for our opening match against Ghana.

The match was a turnaround from Australia's commanding 3-1 win over Canada three days previous, this time the home side was more determined to gain a result whilst the Matildas lacked punch and purpose.

National Coach Greg Brown continued to experiment with the lineup, and best performers were youngsters Dianne Alagich at the back and midfielder Kelly Golebiowski.

The result marred defender Sarah Cooper's day, awarded the captaincy for

the match in recognition of her 50th full international cap. The former Northern Territorian became the fifth Australian female to reach the milestone.

The Matildas were neither cohesive nor competitive in the 29 degree heat. The majority of the first half was battled out in midfield, neither side presenting any real danger in attack.

Then Canada broke the deadlock a minute after the restart, star attraction Charmaine Hooper bundled over by Alagich in the box.

Hooper herself converted the resultant penalty kick. The Canadian lead was doubled just nine minutes later when a poor clearance from Cooper flew across the goalmouth.



Bridgette Starr ... unlikely to play against Ghana.

Substitute Andrea Neil accepted the ball and had time to control and chip stranded keeper Belinda Kitching.

Julie Murray had the best of Australia's chances on goal, twice intercepting poor back passes and rounding the keeper, but managing only to shoot over the bar.

Nicci Wright was otherwise rarely troubled in the Canadian goal.

"This was a disappointing end to our preparation," said Brown.

"The performance lacked hunger, desire and urgency. On the positive side, Di Alagich as again impressive at the back, and Kelly Golebiowski has proved she'll be a handful at the World Cup. Now our biggest problem is injuries."

The Matildas outfit must now regroup over the next week to come out fully firing for their opening World Cup match against Ghana on 20 June.

Australia: Kitching, Alagich, Starr (Swaffer 23), Tann-Darby (Bartlett 67), Cooper, Golebiowski, Peters, Hepperlin (Forman 60), Iannotta (Casagrande 54), Ferguson (Salisbury 23), Murray.

WORLD CUP - HERE WE COME

The fever is building, the excitement and expectation is rising, the nervous energy is starting to kick in. Yes — the 3rd FIFA Women's World Cup is a matter of days away.

About to unfold is the biggest ever single women's sporting event in world history, and the American and international public will be out in force to celebrate the best of women's football.

Over 425,000 tickets have been sold to date, with the original target of half a million tickets expected to be exceeded. Recording the extravaganza will be two thousand journalists across the seven host cities, and every match will be beamed into American homes via one of three networks.

Over 65,000 will grace Giants Stadium on 19 June for the grand opening ceremony and first doubleheader featuring USA v Denmark and Brazil v Mexico.

The football will be like nothing else, women's soccer at its most thrilling and professional level ever, and all 320 players from the expanded number of sixteen nations out to make a name for themselves.

Every game will have its own story, so many different styles and tactics, with the newer combatants out to knock over the traditional powers.

World Cup football is different to anything else. Emerging nations can dream of breaking through and rewriting history. The favourites have been there before and have behind them the experience and know-how.

There are no second chances — teams need to be at their consistent best, or the smallest lapse can prove so costly. Anything can happen.

The Matildas need to turn the disappointment of their latest loss into a positive, and use it as a timely reminder that nothing comes for free.

You have to earn success, work at your hardest and never let your guard down. No-one at this level can be taken lightly.

Enter Ghana. Australia's first opponent and our most important match at this stage of the game. The Matildas can't afford to dismiss this opener as an easy task if they want to advance to the quarterfinals. A winning start is vital to the entire campaign.

Ghana is dangerous on several fronts. Firstly because we have never played them or seen them play and know so little about them. We only managed to secure the first video footage of the 'Black Queens' on our arrival in America.

Africa has become the new force in men's world football, and the women are expected to follow suit. They will have all the flair and skills, athleticism and fearlessness of their male counterparts.

It is their very first World Cup but they will have nothing to lose, and will play with the greatest of pride and passion.

They have already made the world sit up and take notice, going down by just the one goal to China in their two matches late last year. Our performance and approach to this game will hold the key to the rest of our World Cup.

In saying that, the Matildas should have every confidence in their own ability and not place themselves under any undue pressure. As long as they remain focused and committed, the rest should follow.

This side is the best prepared Australian Team ever, and they have the understanding and knowledge to adjust their game to the circumstances and get the desired result.

With all the work that's gone into this World Cup over the last year, it all comes down to what happens on the day. Go The Matildas.

MATILDAS NEW WEBSITE

In the next few days, the AWSA will be releasing its brand new website in celebration of the Matildas and the World Cup.

Make sure you keep up with their progress as the site will be updated at least once a day from the US with all the latest match reports, results, news and views, plus player profiles and photographs.

Check it all out on the new address - www.matildas.org.au

Send your best wishes and messages to the Matildas as they enter their most important campaign to date.

Attn - Lesley Mann,
Australian Team Manager
Westin Waltham Hotel, Boston
0015-1-781-290.5626

QUEENSLAND

A national league debut is always a memorable moment for all players who get the opportunity but when your team is leading 1-0 and you give away a penalty, then it is even more memorable.

That's what happened to Sydney born Daniel Duke.

You could say Duke was born a goalkeeper. Before he even started playing the game, Duke remembers that as a three and four year old, his big brother was soccer mad and insisted that he was a striker, so young Daniel was always the target as Matthew practised his kicking.

Nothing changed when at the age of five, Duke started playing for Moorebank SC and

opted to play in goals.

Dad Brian was a Warrant Officer in the Army and family moves were a constant part of life.

Duke played in Wagga Wagga for the Riverina District representative side when he was only nine years old.

In Melbourne for Dad, saw Duke take the field for Rosella club for a season, and yet another move found the family in Brisbane and as an U12, he joined the George Merrin coached, Brisbane City.

In 1993, Duke made Brisbane City's first team under coach Bobby Hamilton. Also that summer, he played for the Queensland Academy of Sport with coach Juan Cutillas and Kim Wishart as the goalkeeping coach.

It was the first year that Queensland participated in the National Youth League.

During the season that the Brisbane Strikers won the national league championship, Duke found himself training with the Strikers and developed the reputation as the best goalkeeper in the Brisbane Premier League. Last season he won the coveted player-of-the-year award.

Brisbane City loaned Duke to the Strikers for the season past but from virtually day one, found himself sidelined for months with a severe back injury. Not a good start to his national league duties.

Finally the moment of baptism arrived. It was the last game of the season against Newcastle Breakers and Duke got the nod from coach John Kosmina.

The first half of the game was quiet for the custodian and Andy Harper had scored in the 40th minute to let the home team go to the break 1-0. Even Kosmina commented to Duke that it had been a quiet half for the rookie.

The second half was similar until the 76th minute when Duke was booked by referee Jeff Tippet for bringing down an attacker in the box.

The conversion made it 1-1 and the Breakers went on to score another just one minute later giving them the three points.

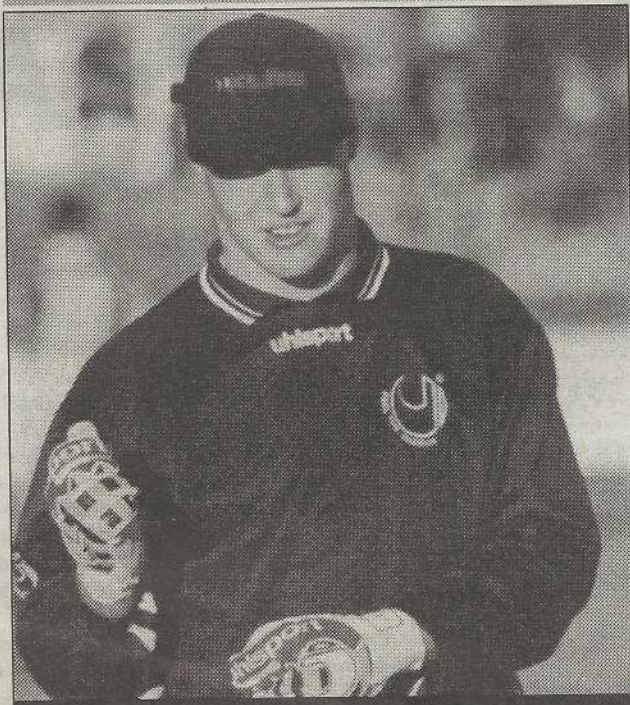
"The penalty decision cost us the game," Duke said.

"I was extremely upset afterwards but Kosmina assured me it wasn't my fault. I don't think I will ever forget my debut."

Uncertain if his services will be sought for the next Strikers season, Duke is currently playing with Brisbane City and pursuing his other loves of golf and motorbike touring with girlfriend, Leigh.

As a primary school teacher at Brisbane's Ferny Grove state school, Duke is unclear of what the future holds for his playing career.

DUKE OF HAZARD



Daniel Duke... new Brisbane Strikers keeper for next season?

"I would like to play regularly in the national league and maybe some day for Australia," Duke said.

"My job doesn't allow me to go away and trial down south, so it does make things difficult."

The 23 year old former Sydneysider now considers himself a Queenslander and is proud of his three Queensland caps, player-of-the-year award and sardonically, round 30 of the 98/99 Ericsson Cup.

The battle for places in Queensland's Premier League top four remains wide open after Mt Gravatt provided an upset win over leaders Rochdale Rovers at Underwood Park on Saturday night.

Mt Gravatt, one of the league's strugglers, inflicted a 2-1 defeat over Rochdale to follow up their first round 4-3 upset.

Mt Gravatt's win enabled them to leapfrog Wynnum to third from bottom after the baysiders suffered a 3-2 loss to cellar dwellers Toowoomba.

Former Brisbane Strikers midfielder, Andy Brayshaw scored from the penalty spot while youngster Mark Bettridge added the other while Rochdale's solitary goal came from Steve Fitzsimmons.

In a thriller at Tingalpa, Wynnum led 1-nil at halftime against Toowoomba before the visitors came home with a rush in the second half to win 3-2.

Toowoomba's goals came from defender Gavin Freir, Cameron Williams and Martin James while reliable striker Scott Rocker and Nick Hadland scored for the home team.

With a long weekend in Brisbane the only other match saw Brisbane City snatch a 3-2 win over Bundaberg at Thabeban Complex on Saturday night.

City midfielder Damien Waugh provided the impetus for a City victory notching a double while rangy Mark Battistin was back amongst the goals for the teams third. Brisbane Strikers forward Wayne Knipe continued his good form landing a double for the home side.

At Lions Stadium, both visitors Ipswich Knights and Brisbane Lions missed a golden opportunity to cut into Rochdale's lead at the top of the table fighting out a scoreless draw.

The draw enables Ipswich to stay third, five points adrift of Rochdale while for Brisbane Lions, it ended their run of three successive losses.

A draw was a fitting result but Ipswich could count themselves lucky not to have goalkeeper Sam Ferguson sent off two minutes from halftime by referee John Peacock when he appeared to headbutt Lions defender, Steve Jackson.

Ipswich had the best chance to break the deadlock in the 25th minute when striker Peter Vogler put John Clark away 30 metres out.

Clark raced into the box and shot past Lions' advancing keeper Jason Lucas but the goalbound shot was cleared off the line by Lions defender, Darren Sime.

Vogler again could have put the visitors ahead one minute later when he snapped a volley from inside the box just wide of the upright.

New Lions Bulgarian recruit, Sasha Radolovic made an impressive debut up front and should fit comfortably into the premier league after playing in Germany last season.

Lions were unlucky not to receive a penalty just before halftime when striker Vedran Becirbegovic appeared to have been felled in the box by Ipswich defender Scot Stenzel.

The match opened up after the break with Becirbegovic and Radolovic's partnership working better after the opening 45 minutes.

Becirbegovic struck a low left foot shot just wide of the far upright in the 62nd minute just out of the reach of Radolovic, who slid in at the far post a fraction of a second late for a tap in.

Ipswich had their chances after the break with Damien Conquest turning in the box before snapping a left foot shot over the crossbar while Conquest later got a touch to a long range shot only to see it deflect just wide of the upright.

In the final 15 minutes Lions controlled the match and were unlucky not to score when Sime headed a chance wide while substitute Frank Mengotti had a powerful shot from point blank range saved brilliantly by Ferguson.

ROUND 18

19-06	Mt Gravatt	v	Wynnum	7.00pm
20-06	Ipswich Knights	v	Gold Coast	2.45pm
20-06	Brisbane City	v	Brisbane Lions	2.45pm
20-06	Toowoomba Utd	v	B'berg Waves	2.45pm
20-06	Taringa Rovers	v	Rochdale Rov	2.45pm

QUEENSLAND UPDATE

XXXX LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pts
Rochdale Rov	17	11	0	6	40	26	14	33
Brisbane City	17	9	3	5	34	22	12	30
IPSW Knights	17	8	4	5	26	21	5	28
Brisbane Lions	17	8	3	6	35	29	6	27
Taringa Rovers	15	7	4	4	24	14	10	25
Gold Coast	15	6	7	2	29	22	7	25
B'berg Waves	17	5	4	8	26	28	-2	19
Mt Gravatt	16	4	4	8	23	38	-15	16
Wynnum	16	4	2	10	24	37	-13	14
Toowoomba Utd	17	2	5	10	14	38	-24	11

ROUND 17 SCORES

Rochdale Rov	1	Mt Gravatt	2
Wynnum	2	Toowoomba Utd	3
B'berg Waves	2	Brisbane City	3
Brisbane Lions	0	IPSW Knights	0
Taringa Rovers v Gold Coast			
(Monday game)			

DIVISION ONE SOUTH

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pts
Rocklea Utd	15	11	2	2	50	18	32	35
Capalaba	15	10	1	4	30	17	13	31
Souths Utd	14	8	3	3	36	18	18	27
Slacks Creek	13	5	4	4	29	31	-2	19
Inala City	13	5	2	6	23	33	-10	17
Olympic Utd	14	5	0	9	25	29	-4	15
Beenleigh	12	4	2	6	22	28	-6	14
Redlands Utd	14	3	3	8	18	36	-18	12
Acacia Ridge	14	1	3	10	16	39	-23	6

ROUND 17 SCORES

Rocklea Utd	0	Capalaba	1
Acacia Ridge	1	Souths Utd	7
Redlands Utd	2	Olympic Utd	1
Slacks Creek - bye			
Inala City v Beenleigh			
(Monday game)			

DIVISION ONE NORTH

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pts
North Star	14	9	2	3	37	19	18	29
Eastern Subs	14	8	4	2	30	18	12	28
Pine Rivers Utd	14	8	2	4	26	15	11	26
Uni of Qld	15	7	2	6	28	27	1	23
Albany Creek	13	6	4	3	26	23	3	22
Newmarket	13	5	2	6	21	23	-2	17
The Gap	14	4	1	9	25	39	-14	13
Grange Thistle	13	2	4	7	15	28	-13	10
Mitchelton	14	1	3	10	13	29	-16	6

ROUNDS 17 SCORES

Uni of Qld	4	The Gap	1
Mitchelton	0	North Star	2
Pine Rivers Utd	3	Newmarket	1
Albany Creek	4	Eastern Subs	3
Grange Thistle - bye			

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PREMIER LEAGUE



PORT PUTS A MAGIC SPELL ON ALTONA

PORT MELBOURNE 2 ALTONA MAGIC 1

By George Koukeris

Current league leaders, Port Melbourne, fought off a desperate battle from past triple champions Altona Magic at Anderson Reserve on Sunday, to win 2-1.

Altona were always going to provide a tough battle for the Sharks.

After an uneventful first half, a quick counter-attack by the Sharks in the 46th minute finally produced a much anticipated goal.

Altona's captain courageous, Tom Markovski, misjudged the pace of an incoming attack by the Sharks' Peter Kakos and deflected the ball over the hands of his 'keeper Darren McGrath and back into his own net.

Port required stability in their midfield and slowly worked to find the co-ordination that would lead to an equaliser. In the 61st minute, the effort paid off as Henry Velkovski drove wide down the right flank and centred the ball inside the six yard box for Slave Bozinovski to head into the top right corner for an impressive equaliser.

Fourteen minutes later, the Sharks were back in front. Kakos again, supplying the venom as he rounded last man Marjan Tasevski and easily put the ball away to earn the Sharks another three points.

The Magic desperately sought to fight back, with a constant barrage of attacks in the final ten minutes of the game.

The Sharks decided to defend their lead, massed around the goal in an 8-man defence.

Sharks: Lyras, Vargas, Tsiakos (Heath), Fak, Latinopoulos, Sonsini, Pappas (Knezevic), Palamaras, Tzirtis, Tsaltas, Kakos (Efstathiou).

Magic: McGrath, Bozinovski, Tasevski (Sapazovski), Risteovski (Cergovski), Micevski, T.Markovski, Vasilevski, Tergovski, Todorovski, Velkovski (Petrevski), Trifunov.

Referee: Jeremy Blaney

Votes: 3- Tzirtis (PM), 2- Todorovski (AM), 1- Kakos (PM)

PRESTON 3 ST ALBANS 2

By Ivan Perkov

At the Goodyear Stadium, Preston Lions and St Albans Saints played a match which resembled a European Cup Final, good passing, attacking football and a goal in the final minutes.

The Lions prevailed 3-2 in a match that could have gone either way.

After a week off, both sides looked fresh and relaxed, the game flowed with accurate passing and shooting which created good goal opportunities.

St Albans, who were missing Krunoslav Razov through suspension, began the brighter of the two sides.

It was in the 9th minute that Hrvoje Karl received a throw-in, turned his marker and shot toward goal. The deflected ball fell to Greg Saric, who side-footed past goalkeeper Lupce Acevski.

After the goal, Preston began to pressure their opponents and in the 13th minute, a good through ball by Chris Emsovski found Warren Spink who squared the ball to Tony Ujgunovski who shot into an unguarded net.

After the first 20 minutes, both sides created good goal scoring chances. Preston capitalised on their opportunity, St Albans squandered theirs.

In the 35th minute, from a deep Sasho Slaveski cross, Emsovski blasted a left foot shot past former team-mate Marijan Vunderl.

Preston began attacking in packs and should have gone further in front after Spink's half-volley rattled the crossbar.

The second half continued with continual goal scoring chances, Spink, Karl and Ujgunovski were all unable to convert.

In the 57th minute, substitute Ivan Razov headed in the equaliser from a corner, after coming on for the injured Saric, Razov scored after the ball had been flicked on. Again, both sides were attacking and looking for three points.

It was in the 61st minute that Spink was deemed to have been felled by the Saints' Martin Raspudic. Emsovski stepped up to take the penalty, but Vunderl saved his penalty brilliantly.

After some end-to-end football, the winner finally arrived in the 89th minute as Kamer Simsek, who had just come on, slid the ball into the path of Spink who, unmarked, side footed the winner.

Lions: Acevski, Slaveski, Lisolaski, Kozic, Ujgunovski (Sterjovski), Spink, Burlak, Emsovski, Stojcevski (Kovacic), Smirnis, Filipovski (Simsek).

Saints: Vunderl, J.Cuze, Raspudic, Colina, Karl (M.Cuze), Dragicevic, S.Rados, Sianidis, Vojtek, Saric (I.Razov), Movric.

Referee: Jim Ouliaris

Votes: 3- Slaveski (PL), 2- Kozic (PL), 1- I.Razov (StA)

FAWKNER 3 SOUTH DANDENONG 2

By Dwyght Tuffnell

Two goals in the last minute was not enough for South Dandenong to get some much-needed points at Fawkner on Sunday.

In truth, the scoreline was very flattering to South Dandenong as the Blues wasted chance upon chance in the second half.

Santo Emmanuele gave the Blues an 11th minute lead, firing in the loose ball after South 'keeper Chris Roche had partially blocked Martin Collins' shot.

The away side had an ideal opportunity to get back into the game just three minutes later when they were awarded a penalty.

John Grimaud had given the ball away to Reshat Mezensof inside the area and his clumsy challenge on the South striker led to referee Carlo Graser awarding the spot-kick.

But they wasted the chance to draw level when Billy Wright guided the kick just wide of the post.

Mid-way through the first half, Viktor Memeti should have equalised when he ran on to Fadil Muriqi's long pass, but shot straight at Maurice Gonzalez in the Fawkner goal.

Peter Psarros, who could and should have finished the game with five or six goals, hit the crossbar two minutes into the second half after Roche had saved well from Collins.

Psarros did find the target in the 49th minute. Released by Josip Biskic, Psarros beat Roche but had his first shot cleared off the line by Anton Buhic, his second attempt though, found the net.

Fawkner struck again just three minutes later when good lead-up play from Biskic and Emmanuele led to Ivan Duzel side-footing home from close range.

The points were not yet safe for Fawkner but judging by some of their casual finishing it was.

Psarros blew two one-on-one's opportunities with keeper Roche in two minutes, another one in the 81st minute and also three other goalscoring chances that were either saved by Roche or missed.

South Dandy got what appeared to be just a consolation goal in the 90th minute when Wright nodded in a deflected Nick van Egmond cross.

Fawkner's hearts were beating a little quicker when Wright, after some terrific work by Agron Tarevski, added a second goal for the visitors within a minute, but it was too little too late.

Blues: Gonzalez, Tramontana, Grimaud, Bordignon (Vazzocchi), Schipano, Di Sauro, Collins, Biskic (Alexopoulos), Duzel, Emmanuele (Murphy), Psarros.

South: Roche, Runje, Tarevski, Buhic, Kirichian (Van Egmond), Moodie, Memeti, Pelja (Ibraimi), Muriqi, Wright, Mezensof (Zekirija).

Referee: Carlo Graser

Votes: 3- Bordignon (FB), 2- Roche (SD), 1- Schipano (FB)

GULLY PUT SIX PAST BENTLEIGH

BENTLEIGH 1 GREEN GULLY 6

By Chris Elysee

Green Gully maintained pressure on the pacesetters in the Premier League with a clinical 6-1 victory over a Bentleigh outfit that seemed to drop their heads when the going got tough during the second half.

Bentleigh were completely outclassed after they had equalised early on in the second half and were very lucky that the score-line was not more comprehensive in favour of the travelling Cavaliers.

The match started positively enough for Bentleigh, dictating the tempo of the game early on. Nonetheless, Green Gully still managed to sneak an early goal when Tony Neceski latched onto a corner that wasn't cleared by the Greens defence, arrogantly tapping the ball past a bewildered Glenn Clarke in the Bentleigh goal.

This was Green Gully's only real chance in the first half, as Bentleigh created good goal scoring chances through Juan Nilo, Haru Micheil and Cameron Pino. Pino was also proving to be a handful in the midfield, with the Cavaliers struggling to contain him.

An equaliser was imminent for Bentleigh and it duly came early on in the second half, when they were finally rewarded for their work when Nilo laid a perfect through ball to George Lenetis. His first time shot was saved by Robert Brian, however the rebound was dispatched effectively by Nilo as his shot hit the

underside of the bar and went in.

This is where the positive play from Bentleigh ended as Green Gully managed to surge in front once again as a cheeky flick-on by Neceski beat Clarke and Stelios Drakos at the near post for a goal.

This seemed to deflate Bentleigh, as they saw their hard work turned around effortlessly by Green Gully.

Neceski's second goal seemed to open the floodgates for Green Gully and they were in for their third when substitute Ben Stafrace produced a perfect flick on header into the path of Brandon Vassallo, who slotted the ball under the advancing Clarke.

Not to be outdone, Stafrace managed to put away the next two Green Gully goals, with the first scored after his initial shot was blocked by Clarke. His

second was a pure striker's goal, being in the right place for a misdirected Zlatko Donev cross.

The rout was complete in stoppage time when Donev was brought down in the penalty area. The subsequent spot-kick was duly converted by Zdravko Atanasovski to cap off a remarkable win for the Cavaliers.

Greens: Clarke, Kalimeris (Kotsovolos), Micheil, McDonagh, Constantinou, Drakos, Rossios

(Papettas), Lenetis (Laurence), Pino, Nilo, Mladenovic.

Cavaliers: Brian, Sevin, Azzopardi, Atanasovski, Georgiadis (D.Stafrace), Markovski, Vassallo (Rutkowski), Spiteri, Neceski, Suric (B.Stafrace), Donev.

Referee: Perry Mur

Votes: 3- Neceski (GG), 2- B.Stafrace (GG), 1- Pino (BG)



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ROUND 17

Port Melbourne Sharks 2 (own goal, Kakos) - Altona Magic 1 (Bozinovski)
Preston Lions 3 (Ujgunovski, Emsovski, Spink) - St Albans Saints 2 (Saric, I. Razov)
Fawkner Blues 3 (Emmanuele, Psarros, Duzel) - South Dandenong 2 (Wright 2)
Altona East Phoenix 0 - Melbourne Raiders 0
Bentleigh Greens 1 (Nilo) - Green Gully Cavaliers 6 (Atanasovski, Vassallo, Neceski 2, Stafrace 2)
Westvale v Springvale White Eagles and Bulleen Inter Kings v Sunshine Georgies played on Monday night

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Port Melbourne Sharks	17	12	4	1	43	19	40
Preston Lions	17	11	2	4	37	22	35
Green Gully Cavaliers	17	9	6	2	35	18	33
Fawkner Blues	17	9	3	5	30	20	30
Bentleigh Greens	17	6	5	6	31	25	23
Bulleen Inter Kings	16	6	5	5	22	18	23
Melbourne Raiders	17	6	5	6	23	27	23
Altona Magic	17	6	3	8	22	33	21
Altona East Phoenix	17	5	5	7	17	23	20
South Dandenong	17	4	5	8	28	31	17
St Albans Saints	17	5	2	10	19	27	17
Westvale	16	3	6	7	20	35	15
Springvale White Eagles	16	3	4	9	19	29	13
Sunshine Georgies	16	3	3	10	17	36	12

ROUND 18 FIXTURES

South Dandenong v Springvale White Eagles (date, time and venue to be advised)

Sunday June 13

Fawkner Blues v Bentleigh Greens - kick off 3pm at Smith Reserve
St Albans Saints v Port Melbourne Sharks - kick off 3pm at Churchill Reserve
Sunshine Georgies v Westvale - kick off 3pm at Chaplin Reserve
Altona Magic v Bulleen Inter Kings - kick off 7pm at Paisley Park

Monday June 14

Green Gully Cavaliers v Altona East Phoenix - kick off 8.15pm at Green Gully Reserve
Melbourne Raiders v Preston Lions - kick off 8.15pm at Epping Soccer Stadium



VICTORIAN LEAGUES



CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE

DIVISION 1 - ROUND 11

Yarraville Glory 0 - Springvale City 1
North Geelong Warriors 1 - Lalor United 2
Oakleigh 2 - Melbourne City 0
Richmond 1 - Northcote City 0
Werribee City 2 - Heidelberg United 2
Westgate 3 - Western Suburbs 2
Doncaster Rovers 2 - Kingston City 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lalor United	11	9	1	1	29	9	28
Westgate	11	7	2	2	24	14	23
Oakleigh	11	7	2	2	17	8	23
Heidelberg United	11	6	3	2	27	19	21
Richmond	11	4	3	4	16	20	15
Doncaster Rovers	11	3	5	3	24	17	14
Western Suburbs	11	4	2	5	16	15	14
Nth Geelong Warriors	11	3	5	3	13	12	14
Yarraville Glory	11	4	2	5	15	17	14
Kingston City	11	4	2	5	14	22	14
Northcote City	11	3	2	6	22	23	11
Melbourne City	11	3	1	7	16	27	10
Springvale City	11	2	3	6	6	19	9
Werribee City	11	0	3	8	11	28	3

ROUND 12 FIXTURES

Saturday June 12
Kingston City v North Geelong Warriors
Western Suburbs v Doncaster Rovers
Heidelberg United v Westgate
Springvale City v Werribee City
Northcote City v Yarraville Glory
Melbourne City v Richmond
Lalor United v Oakleigh



DIVISION 2 - ROUND 11

Thomastown/Regent 2 - Frankston Pines 4
Knox City 0 - Essendon 3
Ringwood City 1 - East Richmond 1
Cranbourne Comets 2 - Satellite City Rovers 1
Diamond Valley United 0 - Croydon City Arrows 2
Altona City 0 - Geelong 3
Frankston Strikers 2 - Old Scotch Waverley 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Essendon	11	7	4	0	28	5	25
Geelong	11	6	3	2	24	19	21
Frankston Pines	10	5	4	1	30	13	19
Cranbourne Comets	11	5	4	2	21	16	19
East Richmond	11	5	4	2	19	17	19
Knox City	11	5	2	4	19	13	17
Altona City	11	5	2	4	10	15	17
Thomastown/Regent	11	3	4	4	21	20	13
Old Scotch Waverley	10	4	1	5	11	17	13
Ringwood City	11	3	4	4	17	24	13
Frankston Strikers	11	2	4	5	14	17	10
Croydon City Arrows	11	2	4	5	13	17	10
Satellite City Rovers	11	2	2	7	8	24	8
Diamond Valley Utd	11	0	2	9	11	29	2

ROUND 12 FIXTURES

Saturday June 12
Old Scotch Waverley v Thomastown/Regent
Geelong v Frankston Strikers
Croydon City Arrows v Altona City
Satellite City Rovers v Diamond Valley United
East Richmond v Cranbourne Comets
Essendon v Ringwood City
Frankston Pines v Knox City

DIVISION 3 - ROUND 11

Bell Park 0 - Mooroolbark 0
Broadmeadows City 2 - North Coburg United 4
Fitzroy City 1 - Banyule City 1
Keilor Park 1 - Laverton Park 4
South Wantirna 1 - Stonnington City 2
Williamstown 1 - Moreland City 3
South Springvale 5 - Pascoe Vale 1

CRAZY JOHN'S MOBILEWORLD COMMUNICATIONS



	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Stonnington City	11	8	2	1	30	14	26
North Coburg United	11	6	3	2	21	11	21
South Springvale	11	5	5	1	17	7	20
Moreland City	11	6	2	3	23	14	20
South Wantirna	11	6	2	3	20	13	20
Fitzroy City	11	4	6	1	24	17	18
Laverton Park	11	4	4	3	21	16	16
Williamstown	11	4	2	5	21	22	14
Mooroolbark	11	3	4	4	11	19	13
Pascoe Vale	11	3	2	6	16	27	11
Bell Park	11	2	4	5	10	16	10
Keilor Park	11	3	1	7	12	23	10
Broadmeadows City	10	1	2	7	11	25	5
Banyule City	10	0	3	7	9	22	3

ROUND 12 FIXTURES

Saturday June 12
Pascoe Vale v Bell Park
Moreland City v South Springvale
Stonnington City v Williamstown
Laverton Park v South Wantirna
Banyule City v North Coburg United
North Coburg United v Fitzroy City
Mooroolbark v Broadmeadows City

DIVISION 4 - ROUND 11

Geelong Rangers 0 - Langwarrin 0
Keysborough 1 - Chelsea 1
Corio 0 - Croxton Park 4
Melton 2 - Sunbury United 0
Nunawading City 1 - Clifton Hill United 2
Sandringham City 4 - Lyndale United 2
Seaford United 3 - Lalor 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Langwarrin	10	9	1	0	35	8	28
Sandringham City	11	8	1	2	42	22	25
Lyndale United	11	6	3	2	24	17	21
Croxton Park	11	5	5	1	27	16	20
Seaford United	11	6	1	4	24	20	19
Melton	11	5	2	4	17	17	17
Sunbury United	11	5	1	5	21	19	16
Lalor	10	4	2	4	19	21	14
Keysborough	11	3	3	5	24	18	12
Clifton Hill United	11	3	2	6	18	27	11
Corio	11	2	3	6	11	26	9
Geelong Rangers	11	1	4	6	11	24	7
Nunawading City	11	2	1	8	10	28	7
Chelsea	11	1	3	7	11	31	6

ROUND 12 FIXTURES

Saturday June 12
Lalor v Geelong Rangers
Lyndale United v Seaford United
Clifton Hill United v Sandringham City
Sunbury United v Nunawading City
Croxton Park v Melton
Chelsea v Corio
Langwarrin v Keysborough

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE

DIVISION 1 - ROUND 9

Endeavour United 3 - Morwell Pegasus 1
Riversdale 0 - Monbulk 2
Brunswick City 2 - South Caulfield 0
Dandenong 2 - Sydenham Park 4
Templestowe Eagles 4 - Mitcham United 0
North Sunshine Eagles 2 - Springvale Condors 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Endeavour United	9	9	0	0	28	4	27
Morwell Pegasus	9	6	1	2	21	9	19

Brunswick City	9	5	3	1	8	18
Riversdale	9	5	1	3	18	16
Sydenham Park	9	4	3	2	23	16
Nth Sunshine Eagles	9	4	1	4	20	13
Mitcham United	9	4	0	5	13	12
Templestowe Eagles	9	2	2	5	17	8
Monbulk	9	2	2	5	10	8
Dandenong	9	2	1	6	14	7
South Caulfield	9	1	1	7	12	4
Springvale Condors	9	1	3	5	5	23

ROUND 10 FIXTURES

Saturday June 12
Springvale Condors v Monbulk
Mitcham United v North Sunshine Eagles
Sydenham Park v Templestowe Eagles
South Caulfield v Dandenong
Morwell Pegasus v Brunswick City
Endeavour United v Riversdale



DIVISION 2 NORTH-WEST -

ROUND 9

Keon Park 0 - South Yarra 3
University of Melbourne 6 - Meadow Park 0
Mill Park 0 - Elwood City 2
Glenroy 4 - Ballarat 1
Broadmeadows United 2 - Somerton City 1
Hoppers Crossing 9 - Melbourne University 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hoppers Crossing	9	7	0	2	33	13	21
Glenroy	9	6	1	2	22	12	19
Elwood City	9	5	1	3	19	18	16
Uni. of Melbourne	9	4	3	2	26	16	15
Ballarat	9	4	3	2	13	11	15
Somerton City	9	4	2	3	23	12	14
Melbourne Uni.	9	3	2	4	15	27	11
Mill Park	9	3	1	5	17	21	10
Broadmeadows Utd	9	3	2	4	16	22	8
Meadow Park	9	1	4	4	11	25	7
Keon Park	9	1	3	5	13	25	6
South Yarra	9	1	2	6	9	15	5

ROUND 10 FIXTURES

Saturday June 12
Melbourne University v Keon Park
Somerton City v Hoppers Crossing
Elwood City v Glenroy
Meadow Park v Mill Park
South Yarra v University of Melbourne
Ballarat v Broadmeadows United

DIVISION 2 SOUTH-EAST -

ROUND 9

Noble Park 0 - Doveton 2
Ashburton 2 - Heatherton United 2
Dandenong Inter 1 - Monash University 0
Clayton 2 - Waverley Wanderers 3
Brandon Park 2 - Dingley City 4
Newborough/Yallourn 4 - Braeside United 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Waverley Wanderers	9	8	1	0	29	8	25
Clayton	9	7	0	2	20	8	21
Doveton	9	5	2	2	12	6	17
Newborough/Yallourn	9	4	3	2	24	17	15
Heatherton United	9	4	2	3	18	18	14
Brandon Park	9	4	1	4	11	13	13
Ashburton	9	3	2	4	24	18	11

Dingley City	9	4	2	3	17	19	11
Monash University	9	2	2	5	10	23	8
Noble Park	9	2	1	6	10	19	7
Dandenong Inter	9	1	2	6	13	26	5
Braeside United	9	1	0	8	7	20	3

ROUND 10 FIXTURES

Saturday June 12
Braeside United v Heatherton United
Dingley City v Newborough/Yallourn
Waverley Wanderers v Brandon Park
Monash University v Clayton
Doveton v Dandenong Inter
Noble Park v Ashburton



DIVISION 3 NORTH-WEST -

ROUND 9

Keilor United 5 - La Trobe University 0
North Glenroy 4 - Brimbank City 2
Darebin United 6 - Northern United 1
Brimbank 2 - Flemington Falcons 1
Watsonia Heights 0 - Whittlesea United 1
West Preston 0 - North Reservoir 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
North Glenroy	9	8	0	1	26	10	24
Whittlesea United	9	7	0	2	16	9	21
Keilor United	9	5	2	2	25	13	17
Darebin United	9	5	0	4	24	12	15
North Reservoir	9	3	5	1	7	8	14
Brimbank City	9	3	4	2	14	15	13
Brimbank	9	4	1	4	15	17	13
La Trobe University	9	3	1	5	14	20	10
Flemington Falcons	9	2	2	5	11	17	8
West Preston	9	1	3	5	12	23	6
Watsonia Heights	9	1	2	6	11	20	5
Northern United	9	1	2	6	14	25	5

ROUND 10 FIXTURES

Sunday June 13
North Reservoir v Keilor United
Whittlesea United v West Preston
Northern United v Brimbank
Brimbank City v Darebin United
La Trobe University v North Glenroy
Flemington Falcons v Watsonia Heights

DIVISION 3 SOUTH-EAST -

ROUND 9

Thornbury United 2 - Noble Park United 5
Old Camberwell Grammar 2 - Endeavour Hills 1
Parkmore 3 - Ivanhoe United 3
North Caulfield 6 - Beaumaris 1
Collingwood City 6 - Newport United 0
Rowville Eagles 2 - Moreland United 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Moreland United	9	5	4	0	20	12	19
Ivanhoe United	9	5	2	2	17	9	17
Noble Park United	9	5	2	2	19	13	17
North Caulfield	8	5	1	2	22	11	16
Endeavour Hills	9	4	2	3	23	16	14
Collingwood City	9	3	3	3	25	17	12
Old Camberwell Gr.	9	3	3	3	9	12	12
Rowville Eagles	9	3	2	4	19	19	11
Thornbury United	8	3	2	3	16	18	11
Beaumaris	9	2	2	5	11	18	8
Parkmore	9	1	3	5	16	29	6
Newport United	9	1	0	8	10	33	3

ROUND 10 FIXTURES

Sunday June 13
Moreland United v Thornbury United
Newport United v Rowville Eagles
Ivanhoe United v North Caulfield
Endeavour Hills v Parkmore
Noble Park United v Old Camberwell Grammar
Beaumaris v Collingwood City



SOCCER CANBERRA

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By Greg Welsh

THE SEASON SO FAR

As we're almost at the half-way stage of the 1999 season, it's time to look back at how the teams have performed so far, as well as predicting where the teams will finish at the end of the season.

Belconnen leads the standings at the moment but only on goal difference as two other teams, Monaro and Weston Creek Royals are equal all on 19 points.

At the bottom of the table, Queenbeyan City Lions have yet to register a point.

The team has been disrupted this season due to off field dramas leading to a committee restructure at the club.

Belconnen United

Position: equal 1st

Points: 19 (5 wins, 2 draws, 1 loss)

Leading goalscorers: Matt Whyte (7) Jason Dunn (3)

Last year the Belconnen Club won basically everything there is to win in ACT soccer, including all



Jason Dunn... One of Belconnen's star players as they fight for this years title.

three (first grade, under 23s and Youth) championships and the Federation Cup.

Key players, Marko Perinovic and Jason Dunn have returned to a winning side that has only conceded a fraction over a goal per game so far this campaign.

And based on the statistics and the team's pedigree, it would be foolish to write off the club's chances of taking back-to-back titles.

However, a draw with strugglers University of Canberra and a loss to Monaro in the last two weeks, together with their elimination from the Federation Cup (with another loss to Monaro thrown in) have shown the Belconnen boys to be human after all.

With a great depth of talent to draw from, Bels' coach Lino Fiorese should be able to ride out a mid-season slump and get his team back to their winning ways, starting next week against Deakin.

Prediction: Their second round clash with Monaro could very well decide the premiership — 1st.

Monaro

Position: equal 1st

Points: 19 (5 wins, 2 draws, 1 loss)

Leading goalscorers: Danny Macor (9) Lazar Simeonov (6)

Last year's premiership runners-up are hoping to go one step better this season, and their 3-2 victory over Belconnen last week was a promising sign.

Captain Danny Macor and Lazar Simeonov have been in good touch up front, while Joe Campagna has

provided an extra spark from midfield.

To top it all off, goalkeeper Tony Guarino has been in excellent form between the posts.

The departure of coach Ian Heywood caused a slight hiccup in Monaro's plans, but new coach Andrew Monterosso (under the guidance of Tony Brennan) has kept the side a premiership contender.

Prediction: Could go all the way this year, provided they don't stumble in the second-round — 2nd.

Weston Creek Royals

Position: equal 1st

Points: 19 (5 wins, 2 draws, 1 loss)

Leading goalscorers: Steve Lazzari (9) Peter Hader (4)

A loss to Juventus and a narrow victory over Queanbeyan in recent weeks demonstrates that the Royals are feeling the pinch after a devastating run of injuries.

When sidelined players (including Martin Lazzari with a broken hand) return, the Creek should once again threaten all sides in the league.

Strikers Steve Lazzari and Peter Hader will be difficult for any side to contain, and if they convert only half the chances they create, the Royals will be a semi-final certainty.

Prediction: The next four weeks will be crucial for any premiership aspirations the Creek have — 3rd.

Gungahlin Juventus

Position: 4th

Points: 17 (5 wins, 1 draw, 2 losses)

Leading goalscorers: John Glass (6) George Cattanach (5)

After a less than impressive start to the season, Juventus has recovered to win its last five in a row, with John Glass and George Cattanach looking deadly up front.

However, the water-tight backline of Oscar Zamora, Craig Rankine and Tony Rinaudo will soon be without Finnish goalkeeper, Elias Oikarinen, who has helped to keep Juve in the chase this year.

Coach Billy Willox has a good blend of youth and experience at his disposal, and a solid victory against University next week should put extra pressure on the top three.

Prediction: 4th.

Canberra Deakin

Position: 5th

Points: 15 (4 wins, 2 draws, 2 losses)

Leading goalscorers: Ben Deighan (4) Paul Ivanic (3)

Despite having the best defensive record in the league, Deakin find themselves in fifth position due to an inability to create and convert goal-scoring chances.

With Andy Rakic and Gaby Exposito the main providers from midfield, Deakin's fortunes could very well centre on whether or not the forward pairing of Ben Deighan and Zac Talevski can put away enough goals.

The loss of David Milin and David Jukic, who are heading to Europe, is offset in some part by the signing of Olyroos' defender, Ivan Zelic.

Bernie Lustica and Zoran Glavinic seem to have settled well into their new coaching roles after the sacking of Ian Shaw.

Prediction: 5th

Capital City Suns

Position: 6th

Points: 14 (4 wins, 1 draw, 3 losses)

Leading goalscorers: Tony Lemezina (7) David Stambolziev (4)

Shane Lyons, fresh from a stint in England, has been included in a Suns outfit that last week thrashed University 6-1.

Tony Lemezina has been in good touch, but his striking partner Gus Cerro has struggled for goals and is now on the outer with coach Bill Dojcinowski.

Could trouble many of the teams but unlikely to finish in the top half of the ladder.

Prediction: 7th

Canberra Olympic

Position: 7th

Points: 10 (3 wins, 1 draw, 4 losses)

Leading goalscorers: Alex Castro (5)

For a team that has six players in the current ACT Rockets representative squad, Olympic have been strangely hot and cold this season.

They annihilated Deakin 6-2 to take out the Federation Cup in style, and were bolstered by the signing of Adelaide Sharks midfielder Alex Castro.

But some disappointing losses have seen the side slip well down the ladder, and only a complete turnaround will see Olympic make the semi's this year.

Prediction: The team should get down to playing some good soccer which they are capable of. They will trouble the leaders and may be the team which decides the winner of the title — 6th

Burns Club

Position: 8th

Points: 6 (2 wins, 6 losses)

Leading goalscorers:

Burns have not done too badly for their first season in the top flight, with important wins over University and Queanbeyan keeping them off the bottom.

However a lack of name players has seen them score only seven goals so far, and they will no doubt be aiming to consolidate their position rather than chase for the title.

Prediction: 9th

University of Canberra

Position: 9th

Points: 5 (1 win, 1 draw, 6 losses)

Leading goalscorers: Dominic Bartone (7)

The goal-scoring finesse shown by Dom Bartone has been one of the few highlights for new University coach Rod Lynes.

A 2-2 draw with leaders Belconnen and a 6-1 loss to the Suns in their last two games illustrates how the students have struggled to put solid performances back-to-back.

Prediction: Will be hoping to at least claw above Burns in the run home — 8th.

Queanbeyan City Lions

Position: 10th

Points: 0 (8 losses)

Leading goalscorers: Danny Burt (3)

A player exodus at the end of last season saw the Lions start this year in disastrous style.

Off the field turmoil, leading to a committee restructure, has certainly not helped the league strugglers on the park.

However, the recruitment of Danny Burt has seen the cellar-dwellers vastly improve in recent times, and they were unlucky not to open their account last week against the Royals.

Burt's Cosmos teammate Nick Purdue will further strengthen a Queanbeyan side that are no longer the easy-beats of the competition.

Prediction: The Lions will get a few results in the second half of the season, but may well find it a case of 'too little too late.' 10th.

ACT PREMIER LEAGUE

Division 1

	P	W	SD	D	L	F	A	Pts
Belconnen United	8	5	2	0	1	27	9	19
Monaro	8	5	2	0	1	28	11	19
Weston Crk Royals	8	5	2	0	1	19	11	19
Gungahlin Juventus	8	5	1	0	2	20	14	17
Canberra Deakin	8	4	1	1	2	17	8	15
Capital City Suns	8	4	1	0	3	22	14	14
Canberra Olympic	8	3	0	1	4	11	12	10
Burns Club	8	2	0	0	6	7	28	6
Uni of Canberra	8	1	1	0	6	14	27	5
Queanbeyan City	8	0	0	0	8	10	40	0

ACT PREMIER LEAGUE

Division 2

	P	W	SD	D	L	F	A	Pts
O'Connor Knights	9	8	1	0	0	18	2	26
Tuggeranong	9	6	1	0	2	24	11	21
Cooma	9	6	0	0	3	16	15	18
Belwest	9	4	1	0	4	21	20	14
ANU	9	2	3	0	4	19	18	12
White Eagles	9	2	2	0	5	10	12	10
Sabres FC	9	0	4	0	5	10	27	8
ADFA	9	1	2	0	6	8	21	7

PREMIER LEAGUE DRAW FOR SUNDAY, JUNE 20TH

Uni of Canberra v Gungahlin Juventus
University of Canberra

Canberra Olympic v Queanbeyan City
O'Connor Monaro v Capital City Suns
Riverside Stadium

Weston Creek Royals v Burns
Woden Park

Canberra Deakin v Belconnen United
Deakin

AUSTRALIAN & BRITISH

SOCCER WEEKLY



AUSTRALIA



Aussie boys humble World Stars

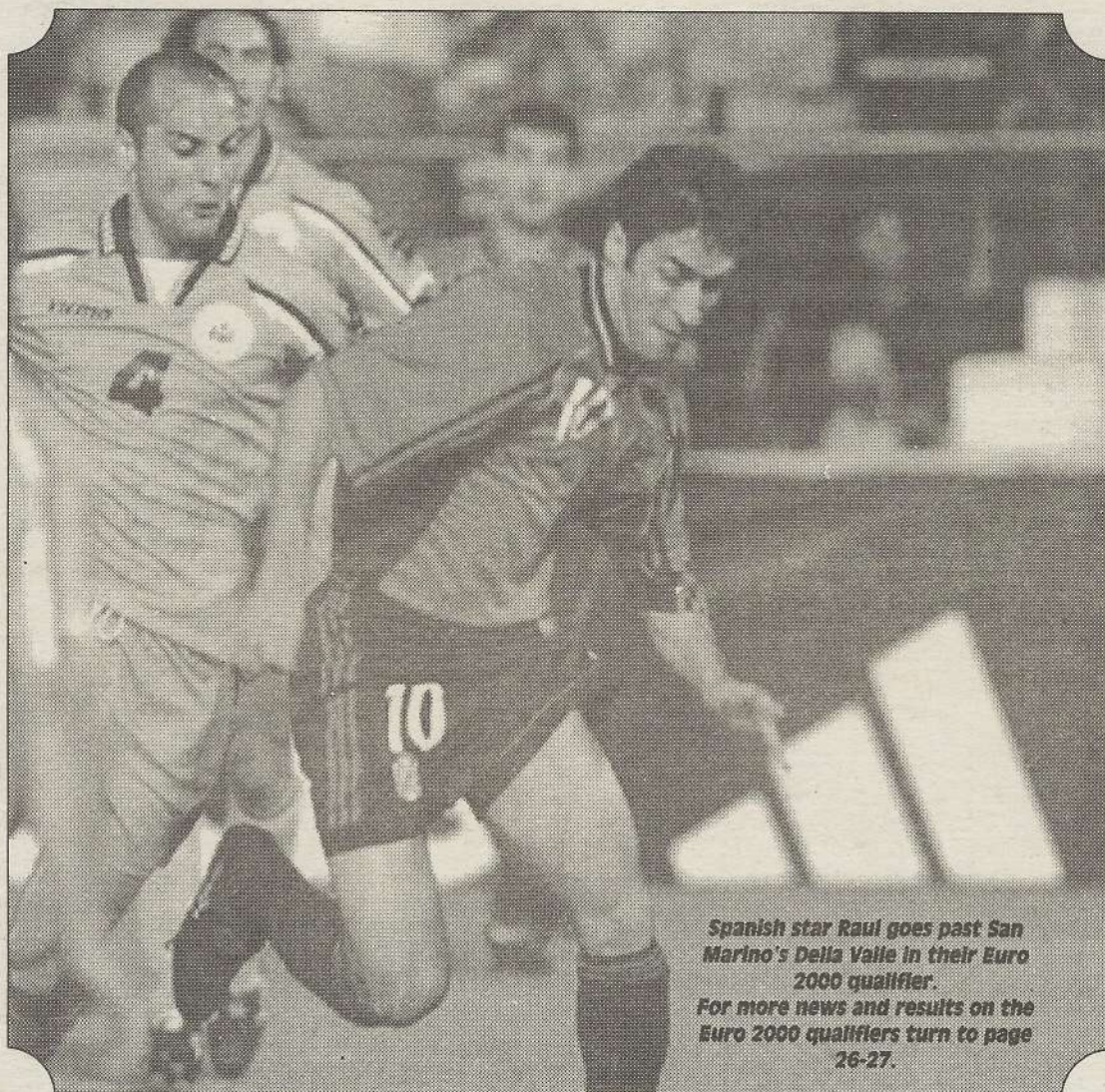
THE WEEK IN THE GLOBAL GAME SPONSORED BY THE FOUR DIEGOS RADIO SHOW AND ADELAIDE'S COAST FM SOCCER



Vieri is the new \$74m man after he signed a record transfer deal with Inter Milan. For more Italian news turn to page 24.



Holland's Edgar Davids takes on Brazilian star Emerson during a friendly match between the two countries in Brazil. For more news on South America, turn to page 23.



Spanish star Raul goes past San Marino's Della Valle in their Euro 2000 qualifier. For more news and results on the Euro 2000 qualifiers turn to page 26-27.



Riquelme of Boca Juniors is tackled by Cuscini of Independiente. For more news on Boca's Championship victory turn to page 23.

Compiled by

ASIA

Soccer Weekly

Belgium defeats Korea in Friendly

Two first-half goals by Sandy Martens gave Belgium a 2-1 victory over South Korea in a friendly match played in Seoul.

Belgium jumped to a 1-0 lead 23 minutes into the match when midfielder, Martens tapped in a sliding pass by Stephane Tanghe from the right corner of the penalty area.

Eight minutes later, Martens scored again, connecting to another cross from the right corner by Tjorven De Brul.

South Korea, relying on quick and short passes, dominated early, but Belgium rallied with long, penetrating passes that left the South Korean defenders in disarray.

South Korea had the better of the second creating numerous chances, but their attacks were repeatedly frustrated by tight marking by the Belgium players.

Four minutes before the whistle, South Korea's Ko Jong-soo, a second-half substitute, won and scored a penalty kick after a Belgian defender blocked his close-range shot with his hand.

Belgian goalie Filip De Wilde, 35, made a few brilliant saves. In the 75th minute, diving to deflect a shot by Kang Chul.

This match was the first between Belgium and South Korea since they played to a 1-1 draw in their first-round World Cup finals match in June last year.

Both teams failed to advance to the second round in the World Cup.

A former head coach of North Korea's national football team has defected to South Korea after escaping the communist state in 1998, according to reports.

Yun Myong-Chan, 50, who served as North Korea's head coach between 1990 and 1994, sought asylum in South Korea in April, Yonhap news agency said quoting government officials.

He was still under investigation as to why and how he escaped the reclusive state, officials said.

A spokesman for the National Intelligence Service said he could not confirm the report.

According to Yonhap, Yun was a member of the North Korean team which competed in the 1973 Asian preliminary rounds for the World Cup.

He had visited South Korea in 1990 and 1991, leading the North Korean team for an inter-Korean matches.

Yonhap says he was demoted in 1994 from head coach to a worker in a sports goods factory in Pyongyang, the North Korean capital.

Three men will go on trial in August accused of a plot to sabotage the floodlights at an English football stadium as part of a Far Eastern betting scam.

Chee Kew Ong, 49, Wai Yuen Liu, 37, and Eng Hwa Lim, 35, are accused of conspiracy to cause a public nuisance and conspiracy to defraud.

Ong and Lim, both from Malaysia, and Liu, will all go on trial in Middlesex on August 16. The trial is expected to last two weeks.

The three appeared at the court denying any of the charges during a 15 minute hearing.

The charges are linked to an alleged attempt to tamper with floodlights at former Premiership side Charlton's home ground in London on February 10, three days before the team were due to play Liverpool.

Betting rules in the Far East mean that if a match is abandoned due to floodlight failure, the "result" stands for betting purposes as long as the second half has started.



Action between South Korea and Belgium during the World Cup.

WORLD CUP LOGO UNVEILED

The official logo of the 2002 FIFA World Cup Korea/Japan, was revealed simultaneously in Seoul and Tokyo, the capital cities of the first countries in Asia to host the world's premier sports event.

The logo was also distributed worldwide by satellite for the international promotion of a brand mark that will identify the first FIFA World Cup of the new millennium.

The circular logo was created by the Interbrand company from its London office, in consultation with its offices in Tokyo and Seoul.

For the first time in the history of the event, the logo features the FIFA World Cup Trophy as a central stylised feature.

Interbrand's Andy Milligan says the design reflects the stature and universal appeal of the FIFA World Cup, while balancing and harmonising the cultures of the host countries as well as the values of FIFA.

"The logo builds on the artistic principles and traditions of Korea and Japan, such as asymmetry,

dynamism and harmony, in order to live up to the high quality of design for which both countries are renowned.

"At the same time, it has to work in many different practical applications, from TV spots to web-sites, banners, stationery and merchandise."

"We chose a circular shape because it is highly relevant," says Interbrand creative director Chris Lightfoot.

"The circle has been part of the Asian culture for many centuries, having symbolised the universe, the sun, the world and even life itself."

A sector of the outer circle has deliberately been left open to symbolise the route to the trophy.

The text accompanying the symbol features the infinity symbol as the two zeros in the year 2002, representing the eternal spirit of unity and the harmonious link between the co-organisers and all others involved in the event.

The name FIFA and the date appear in gold, to represent quality, while the logotype for the names Korea and Japan are a modernised version of a traditional Asian typeface.



Japanese fans at the '98 World Cup. The 2002 World Cup is being held in their own backyard.

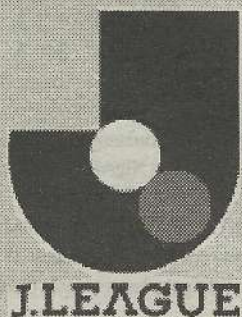
This is the new logo for the 2002 World Cup which was unveiled by both South Korea and Japan who will jointly host the tournament.



2002
FIFA WORLD CUP
KOREA JAPAN

J-LEAGUE TABLES

These are the standings in the J-League as it takes a two month break for the Kirin Cup, Olympic qualifiers and Copa America, in which Japan will compete as guests. The second stage starts in the first week of August.



STANDINGS

1. Iwata	15	12	0	3	29	15	34
2. Kawasaki	15	11	1	3	20	15	32
3. Shimizu	15	10	1	4	28	23	30
4. Kashiwa	15	10	0	5	26	18	29
5. Cerezo Osaka	15	10	0	5	25	21	29
6. Hiroshima	15	9	0	6	30	18	27
7. Yokohama	15	8	1	6	31	20	23
8. Nagoya	15	7	1	7	30	23	21
9. Kashima	15	6	1	8	23	19	18
10. Gamba Osaka	15	6	0	9	21	25	17
11. Fukuoka	15	6	0	9	23	30	16
12. Kobe	15	5	1	9	20	24	15
13. Urawa	15	3	4	8	21	33	13
14. Kyoto	15	4	0	11	18	28	12
15. Ichihara	15	4	2	9	19	34	12
16. Hiratsuka	15	3	0	12	15	33	9

Compiled by

AFRICA

Soccer Weekly

CLUBS FACING
SANCTIONS

Three leading African clubs face sanctions this week as investigations into irregularities are held by the Confederation of African Football, which began a week-long series of high-profile meetings in Cairo.

CAF Cup holders CS Sfaxien of Tunisia, Orlando Pirates of South Africa and the fabled Ghanaian club Asante Kotoko all face possible fines or suspensions if found guilty by the CAF's competition committee of various improprieties.

CS Sfaxien will be charged with trying to bribe a referee ahead of its CAF Cup second round, second leg match against Nkana FC of Zambia in Ndola last month.

The other two clubs face charges of using banned or ineligible players.

Two Sfax officials, club vice-chairman Fakhri Yaiche and committee member Fethi Boucetta, were arrested by Zambian police after the alleged incident, which came despite the Tunisian club having a handy 4-0 lead from the first leg two weeks earlier.

The pair, as well as another official, Salaheddine Zahaf, have already been banned for life by an embarrassed Tunisian football federation but the club still has to answer to CAF.

A full report on the incident has been prepared by Leo Mugabe, president of the Zimbabwe Football Association and the match commissioner for the game in Zambia.

He and referee Kabelo Molepo from Botswana alerted the police to the bribery attempt.

CAF officials hinted this week that Sfax faced a heavy fine and possible suspension from future African club competitions if found guilty, but were unlikely to be kicked out of this year's tournament.

Sfax lost the second leg 1-0 to Nkana but still qualified for the quarter-finals in September.

Pirates are the subject of a protest by Botswana defence Force XI, who lost 9-1 on aggregate to the South African club in the first round of the African Cup Winners' Cup in March.

The Botswana military team are protesting against Pirates' use of Mozambican international defender Tomas, who they say was registered for the African club competition despite not being registered to play for Pirates in the South African domestic league.

CAF rules state that a player must be licensed in the domestic competition to be eligible to compete in any one of the three annual African club competitions.

Tomas, signed late last year by Pirates, was not registered in South Africa's premier league because Pirates had already filled their quota of five foreign nationals in their squad.

"We are hoping to get BDF restored in the competition," said Botswana Football Association secretary-general Ashford Mamelodi.

Asante Kotoko face charges of using a banned player in their Cup Winners' Cup second round tie against Al Masry of Egypt last month, which they lost on a penalty shootout.

Former Ghanaian international striker George Arthur is currently banned by FIFA after a transfer dispute with his previous employers, Al Ahli of Egypt, but played in the first leg for Kotoko against Al Masry.



South Africa will present its bid to stage the 2006 World Cup to the African Soccer Confederation (CAF) executive in Cairo.

FIFA President Sepp Blatter, who has repeatedly urged that the event go to an African country if it was able to meet all of FIFA's strict criteria regarding telecommunications, security and infrastructure, would also be present at the CAF executive session.

A team led by Danny Jordan, chief executive of the committee that has put together South Africa's \$20 million proposal for the World Cup, will argue that other contenders should step down to allow a unified bid that would improve the continent's chances of hosting the finals for the first time.

Egypt, Ghana and Nigeria have already dropped out of the race, but Morocco are still in contention against non-African bidders Brazil, England and Germany.

Morocco, which has twice unsuccessfully bid for the World Cup in the past, are not expected to address CAF with their proposed bid at the weekend.

All bids have to be with FIFA, world soccer's ruling body by the end of next month. The decision on where the finals will be held in 2006 will be taken by FIFA's 24-man executive committee in March next year.

South Africa qualifies for
the African Nations Cup

South Africa ensured a berth in next year's Africa Nations Cup finals with a 2-0 win over Mauritius in Durban.

The victory means South Africa, finalist at France '98, will finish in one of the top two qualifying positions in group four, leaving Mauritius with just five points from five games.

South Africa now has 10 points from five games.

South Africa found it hard to break through despite aerial domination and a number of first-half chances.

The breakthrough came in the 57th minute when Thabo Mngomeni scored for South Africa from close range.

David Nyathi, playing his first home match for the team in more than a year, created the goal with a strong run down the wing.

Substitute Benedict McCarthy added a second for South Africa with 21 minutes left, beating the offside trap to round the goalkeeper and tap home.

Mauritius' captain Jean-Marc Ithier was yellow carded in the second half meaning that he is suspended for their final qualifier against Gabon on June 20.

South Africa still have to play Angola also on June 20 but coach Trott Moloto said he was considering resting key players for the trip to Luanda.

"Some of the European-based players might need a rest, but we will sit down with the boys and make a decision this week," Moloto said.

Uganda scored with four minutes left to snatch a 1-0 win over Liberia in an African Nations Cup Group seven qualifying match at Nakivubo Stadium.

Victory ended a disastrous run of three consecutive group defeats for Uganda, during which the Cranes failed to score a goal.

The win put them back in contention for the second qualifying spot in the group.

Runaway leaders Tunisia clinched a place at the 2000 finals in Ghana and Nigeria by winning 2-0 in Uganda during April.

Tunisia have 12 points, Uganda six and Algeria and Liberia four each.

Ssozi scored the decisive goal to give coach Paul Hasule success in his first competitive match since replacing Asuman Lubowa, who quit after the home loss to Tunisia.



South African player, Bartlett. His team has qualified for the African Nations Cup in 2000.

Cote d'Ivoire has virtually sealed a place in the 2000 African Nations Cup after holding Namibia to a 1-1 draw in their Group three qualifying match at the Independence Stadium.

The Ivorians have 10 points after five rounds.

Namibia took the initiative against their more experienced rivals as they sought their first group win.

Namibia went ahead after 56 minutes following an amateurish blunder by veteran goalkeeper Alain Gouamene.

The hero of the 1992 Nations Cup-winning team kicked his clearance straight to Jacobs, who had trials with Manchester United last year, and the midfielder lobbed the ball into an empty net.

An often sluggish and cautious Cote d'Ivoire team were stung by the score and gradually became more adventurous as Namibia retreated into a defensive shell.

But the visitors had to wait until three minutes from the final whistle before levelling when Modibo Diallo latched on to a loose ball giving goalkeeper Ronnie Kanalelo no chance from close range.

AFRICA NATONS CUP STANDINGS

Group 1

Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cameroon	3	2	1	0	7	1	7
Mozambique	3	1	0	2	4	8	3
Eritrea	2	0	1	1	1	3	1

Ghana withdrew after becoming co-hosts

Group 2

Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Morocco	3	1	2	0	5	4	5
Togo	3	1	1	1	5	4	4
Guinea	2	0	1	1	1	3	1

Sierra Leone disqualified after failing to fulfil two fixtures

Group 3

Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cote d'Ivoire	5	3	1	1	7	2	10
Congo	4	2	1	1	2	2	7
Mali	4	1	2	1	2	2	5
Namibia	5	0	2	3	2	7	2

Group 4

Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Africa	5	3	1	1	8	3	10
Gabon	4	2	0	2	5	7	6
Mauritius	5	1	2	2	4	6	5
Angola	4	1	1	2	4	5	4

Group 5

Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Burkina Faso	3	2	1	0	6	3	7
Burundi	3	1	0	2	3	5	3
Senegal	2	0	1	1	1	2	1

Nigeria withdrew after becoming co-hosts

Group 6

Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zambia	4	3	1	0	5	2	10
DR Congo	4	2	1	1	6	5	7
Madagascar	4	1	1	2	5	6	4
Kenya	4	0	1	3	2	5	1

Group 7

Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tunisia	4	4	0	0	11	1	12
Algeria	4	1	1	2	6	5	4
Uganda	5	2	0	3	3	11	6
Liberia	5	1	1	3	5	8	4

Note: Group winners, runners-up in Groups 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, co-hosts Ghana and Nigeria and holders Egypt qualify for the finals.

Runners-up in Groups 1 and 5 and Zimbabwe stage a mini-league between July 3 and August 29 with the winners filling the last available places.

SCANDINAVIA VIA

DENMARK LEAVE IT UNTIL LATE AT ANFIELD

**Wales
Denmark**

Wales' hopes of qualifying for Euro 2000 via the play-offs took a major blow as they conceded two late goals that gave Denmark a 2-0 win at Anfield.

Former Newcastle forward Jon Dahl Tomasson, a failure in English football, and Stig Toefling, another substitute, netted in the last six minutes of the game to open up the Danes' own qualification chances.

Bobby Gould had resigned after defeat in Italy, challenging the players to respond.

That they did in a hard-working performance, but a

0

Williams and Robert Page all left out from the side beaten 4-0 in Italy.

2

Wimbledon's John Hartson came in for his first start for Wales in a year, and Fulham's Chris Coleman returned after an ankle injury to play in a more conventional four-man defence.

Despite an opening spell in which the Welsh dragon roared with renewed vigour, Jesper Grondjaer tested Southampton goalkeeper Paul Jones after he had got behind Barnsley's Darren Barnard on the right.

Jones was to be the busiest Welshman on the pitch, with Southall running close behind with his be-suited touchline urgings.

After 27 minutes he tipped over a long-range strike from Chelsea's Bjarne Goldbaek before John Hartson earned a yellow card as the tackles began to fly in.

Wales' best first-half chance came after half an hour when Ryan Giggs curled a clever ball in from the left, and his soon to be former team-mate Peter Schmeichel needed all his speed and commitment to come off his line to get to the ball in front of

Benfica's Dean Saunders' diving frame.

Giggs saw one wicked free-kick sneak just wide, and then saw a deep free-kick that Coleman rose above the defence to head powerfully and narrowly wide.

Denmark should have taken the lead on 38 minutes when Jan Heintze's cross from the left was met by striker Ebbe Sand, who saw his 10-yard free header

drop inches wide of the far post.

Jones made further stops from Spurs' Allan Nielsen and Heintze at the end of the first half, and Grondjaer and Nielsen twice more in the second as the Danes imposed their authority.

The Welsh were missing their usually fervent fans, as only 10,000 were present at Anfield.

John Robinson hurled himself across the line to stop Sand's follow-up effort to the Grondjaer save.

Jones spoilt his great night in goals when he mistimed an 84th minute punch, leaving Tomasson free to fire in his first international goal.

Denmark wrapped up victory in injury-time when Coleman was penalised for pushing Tomasson in the box. Toefling stepped up to hammer the ball home.

It was a fine way for Manchester United's departing hero Peter Schmeichel, who captained the Danes and won his 112th cap, to finish a momentous personal season.

Wales: Jones, Jenkins, Barnard (Legg 90), Robinson (Pembroke 86), Melville, Coleman, Speed, Saunders, Hartson (Bellamy 87), Hughes, Giggs.

Subs Not Used: Symons, Page, Williams, Crossley.

Booked: Hartson.



Alan Nielsen of Denmark (l) is tackled by Welshman, John Robinson at Anfield during the Group one Euro 2000 clash.

Denmark: Schmeichel, Colding, Henriksen, Høgh, Heintze, Goldbaek, Nielsen (Toefling 83), Grondjaer, Molnar (Tomasson 70), Joergensen (Frandsen 90), Sand.

Subs Not Used: Olsen, Nielson, Sørensen, Frederiksen.

Goals: Tomasson 84, Toefling 90 pen.

Att: 10,000

Ref: Amande Ancion (Belgium)



Super Dane, Peter Schmeichel kept out the Welsh team and former Man. United teammate, Ryan Giggs.

third successive defeat following the reverses in Switzerland and Italy means that once again, Wales look like missing out on the final stages of a major tournament.

Under the new caretaker management team of Neville Southall and Mark Hughes, Wales abandoned the sweeper system preferred by the despised and departed boss Gould, with Craig Bellamy, Adrian

ICELAND LOSE AS FINLAND FLOPS OUT OF EURO 2000

Valery Karpin scored with a diving header just before half time to give Russia a hard-earned 1-0 home win over previously unbeaten Iceland in their European championship group four qualifier.

The Celta Vigo midfielder, who scored the winner in the 3-2 upset of world champions France, latched on to a cross on the left from Dmitry Khokhlov to send the 36,000 capacity crowd leaping to its feet and standing

as one for the Russian's who are now in with a great chance of qualifying for Euro 2000.

It was Iceland's first defeat in 11 matches. Russia dominated the first half but had trouble penetrating the tight Icelandic defence and striker Alexander Panov, who scored twice against the French, was tightly marked for most of the match.

For their part, Iceland rarely threatened Russian goalkeeper, Alexander Filimonov apart from a few long crosses.

The win puts Russia back in contention for the finals with 12 points, level with Iceland after seven matches.

Ukraine, who were held to a surprising 0-0 draw by Armenia, although they still lead the group on 15 points.

Finland were held to a 0-0 draw by Moldova in their

European group three qualifier, practically ending Finland's hopes of reaching next year's finals.

Finland, who were without their injured striker Jari Litmanen, looked like a better team but had only a couple of scoring opportunities in mostly uneventful match.

Their best chance came late in the first half when striker Mika-Matti Paatelainen hit the post from only a matter of feet away.

The young strike should have done better and at the end, it was the difference between winning and losing for Finland.

Moldova saw their lone chance disappear when Finnish keeper Antti Niemi stopped Radu Rebeja on a breakaway mid-way through the first half.

The draw left Finland, with just seven points from six games, a distant third, trailing both Germany and Turkey, who have played five matches, by five points.



Finland's Jari Litmanen was unable to play because of injury.

Moldova remain bottom with only three points after seven matches despite holding Finland to a draw.



Hermann Hreidarsson of Iceland (r) fights for the ball with Alexander Panov of Russia during the Euro 2000 qualifier in Moscow.

NTH AMERICA

MATTHAEUS TO PLAY IN AMERICA

German football legend Lothar Matthaeus has signed a flexible contract with the New Jersey/New York MetroStars meaning he can join them when he likes, but it is likely to stay with Bayern Munich for next season.

The 38-year-old Matthaeus, who excelled for Germany in a 6-1 win against Moldova for his 136th cap, explained how the new contract did not detract from his commitment to Bayern.

"I could have broken my contract if I had thumped by fist on the table but I didn't want to

Don't look now, but it now appears that Lothar Matthaeus is coming to Major League Soccer soon.

A high-level source within MLS says there is reasonable confidence that the German star will play this season in New York after signing what has been termed "a flexible" contract covering 18 months and paying about \$1 million.

It is expected that Matthaeus will play the remainder of this season and the next for the MetroStars.

"It's news to me," MLS media relations director Dan Courtemanche said.

Matthaeus has another year to run on his contract with German club Bayern Munich.

Bayern president Franz Beckenbauer has said that he is willing to release Matthaeus "if it makes sense for him and for the club."

Two weeks ago the assumption was it did make sense.

Then it began to look doubtful and the deal seemed doomed. Now, according to the sources, several things are falling into place to allow Matthaeus to come immediately.

Beckenbauer's objection to letting Matthaeus go was that despite his 38 years, he is still one of the top defenders in the Bundesliga, and an absolutely key to Bayern's scheme.

Now it appears Beckenbauer is on the verge of signing the world class defender he would need to replace Matthaeus.

Paraguayan defender Carlos Gamarra, who finished second in voting for South American player of the year, is reportedly on his way to Bayern.

Another obstacle that has been removed is Matthaeus desire to play for Germany in the European Championships next summer.

Matthaeus had said, "If I accept the [MetroStars] offer, there will be no more games for Germany for me."

But now Germany's national team coach Erich Ribbeck has assured Matthaeus that he can still play in Euro 2000 even if he leaves the Bundesliga to play club football in the United States.

Matthaeus can still play at the international level, and is a key to the German national team.



DC STILL HAS THE CLASS

Despite continued salary cap losses and injuries, D.C. United continues to be the class of Major League Soccer.

It has now won eight games following consecutive victories against Eastern Conference favorite Columbus Crew and Western Conference leader Chicago Fire.

The most recent, a 1-0 win against the Crew wasn't even close. D.C. United didn't miss All-Star defenders Eddie Pope and Carlos Llamasa, who remained out with injuries.

Tom Presthus has been strong in goal. Jeff Agoos may not have international-level speed but he does other things well and he has been dominant on defence.

Equally important has been Richie Williams. When the defensive midfielder was out early in the season, D.C. United floundered.

Midfielder Marco Etcheverry continues as the best offensive player in Major League Soccer, and has been helped by the revival of forward Jaime Moreno.

Tough times are ahead, with national team commitments shredding the lineup this week, and later during the summer with the Copa America and the Confederations Cup. But don't count D.C. United out of a fourth consecutive trip to MLS Cup in November.

Former coach Bruce Arena says it is probably the "most talented" team in MLS.

In the West, he praised Colorado Rapids for picking up strong international players and a "couple of good trades," undoubtedly referring to the acquisition of defensive midfielder Matt McKeon from Kansas City.

He looks at Dallas Burn and defending champion Chicago Fire as other strong contenders.

Arena, now coach of the U.S. national team, said there is no need to apologize for the low scores in MLS this year.

"Coaches are the ones who are getting fired, and they are going to do everything to stay in games," he said.

"Teams need to have a good defence and that's what has happened. Any good league, teams will play more defense. It doesn't mean it's not good soccer. There's a lot of pressure in MLS to do well. And I don't see too many executives getting fired, just coaches."

Former D.C. United wing midfielder Tony Sanneh, now a regular with Bundesliga (Germany) third-place finisher Hertha Berlin, said "nine out of 10 teams" in Germany "are not better than D.C. United."

Appearing on the call with Arena, he downplayed the transition from MLS to the Bundesliga, "It's just soccer."

He did say there was more emphasis in practice overseas on off-the-ball training, while there was more time spent on-the-ball

at D.C. United.

His emergence as a late-season starter in Germany surprised many in the U.S. soccer community.

"We don't respect ourselves that much," he said, referring to the equally stunning success of wing midfielder Frankie Hejduk with Bundesliga second-place finisher Bayer Leverkusen.

"We're not willing to take the risk (of going overseas). If me and Frankie and others do well, there is less of a risk factor for others (to go overseas)."

These may not be words Major League Soccer wants to hear. Neither Sanneh nor Hejduk were regarded as star players in MLS, yet they are making at least twice what they would be domestically.

Arena was asked about the status of Dallas attacking midfielder Jason Kreis, who is No. 2 in MLS scoring with 10 goals and five assists. "We're going to need to bring him in. I'm not sure positionally where he fits in."

Arena said some national team veterans, who haven't played this year, have been impressive, and may warrant a recall.

He particularly cited defender Marcelo Balboa of the Colorado Rapids. He also mentioned midfielder John Harkes of New England, dropped last year by then-coach Steve Sampson: "The possibility still exists."

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Team	W	L	Pts	GF	GA	SW	SL
D.C. United	8	3	20	25	17	2	1
Columbus	7	4	15	10	9	3	1
Tampa Bay	6	5	12	12	15	3	1
New England	5	6	11	13	13	2	3
MetroStars	4	7	8	13	19	2	2
Miami	4	9	8	14	24	2	2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Team	W	L	Pts	GF	GA	SW	SL
Dallas	7	5	19	22	10	1	4
Chicago	6	5	18	19	12	0	2
Colorado	7	3	17	21	14	2	2
Los Angeles	6	6	12	8	7	3	4
San Jose	7	5	9	16	22	6	0
Kansas City	1	10	3	8	20	0	3

Key: W-win, L-loss, Pts-points, GF-goals scored, GA-goals allowed, SW-shootout win, SL-shootout loss.



Lothar Matthaeus is on his way to play in the US but when will he begin.

because I have a sense of my responsibilities," Matthaeus said.

Matthaeus, who captained Germany to the 1990 World Cup title, has played for Germany for 19 years and in five World Cup tournaments, yet he still hopes to go to the forthcoming Confederations Cup in Mexico.

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ARGENTINA HELD BY MEXICO

Mexico and Argentina played a 2-2 draw in an exhibition game in front of a sellout crowd of 64,433 at Soldier Field, Chicago.

Most of those in attendance were fans of Mexico, which used the game as a warmup for the Confederations Cup, while Argentina was preparing for the Copa America.

Argentina was shorthanded the entire second half after Juan Sorin was ejected in the 45th minute.

Argentina went ahead 2-1 when Gustavo Lopez took Cristian Gonzalez's centering pass and rolled the ball into the right side of the net in the 52nd minute.

Mexico were level with Paulo Cesar Chavez's header in the 77th minute. Isaac Terrazas lobbed the ball to the middle of the box where Chavez angled the ball into the right side of an open goal.

Mexico had the best of the opportunities, outshooting Argentina 17-6.

"I liked the way, with 10 players, the team

was able to draw the game," Argentina coach Marcelo Bielsa said.

"It was very positive the way the team played today."

Mexico took a 1-0 lead in the 14th minute when Luis Hernandez knocked in his own rebound from the left side.

Argentina drew level five minutes later when Julio Cruz took possession of Roberto Ayala's direct kick and shot the ball in off the hands of goalie Jorge Campos.

"Being our first game, and especially against an excellent team like Argentina, we did very well," Mexico coach Manuel Lapuente said.

"Perhaps we could have scored more goals, but overall the performance of our team was extremely good."



Argentina's Gustavo Lopez (l) gets past Mexican, Rodrigo Lara during the friendly played in Chicago.

STH AMERICA

The Samba Kings are back

Brazil has shown that they will be a force in the Copa America following their comprehensive 3-1 defeat of European giants, Holland in the Brazilian town of Goiania.

The match will be remembered for other reasons as five players were sent off in a niggly, bad-tempered friendly.



Leonardo was the star for Brazil scoring two goals in the 3-1 defeat of Holland.

The Dutch finished a peculiar match with eight men after having Edgar Davids, Andre Ooijer and Peter van Vossen dismissed.

Brazil ended with nine after Rivaldo and Amoroso, who opened the scoring, were also shown the red card.

The sendings-off all came in the second half after Brazil had taken a 3-0 first half lead with two goals from Leonardo and one from Amoroso.

Pierre van Hooijdonk, recalled for the first time since last year's World Cup, scored a late consolation for the Dutch after coming on as a substitute.

Strangely, both sets of players were lethargic for much of the game but when they decided to show some aggression, it was channelled the wrong way, into nasty kicks and late tackles.

The most bizarre sending-off involved Davids and Rivaldo who was dismissed in injury time after a clash in which the Brazilian pulled the dreadlocked Dutchman's hair as they tumbled after a challenge.

The incident came after the teams had spent the last few minutes kicking the ball aimlessly around waiting for the final whistle.

Van Vossen, hero in the 2-2 draw between the same teams a week earlier when he scored a spectacular equaliser, started the early procession towards the dressing room when he was sent off for a second bookable offence midway through the second half.

He was followed almost immediately by Amoroso, whose second yellow card offence was to stop Dutch goalkeeper Sander Westerveld from taking a goal kick.

His first was a vicious lunge at Ooijer's groin in the first-half, which had deserved a red on its own.

Ooijer also went for two bookable fouls.

Amoroso fired Brazil's opening goal after 16 minutes, converting an easy chance set up by Rivaldo, shortly after he had an effort disallowed for offside.

Leonardo prodded the ball home in the 38th



Holland's Phillip Coccu tackles Brazilian Roni, during a friendly match won by Brazil, 3-1.

minute after winning a tussle with Frank de Boer and scored again four minutes later, slipping the ball through an opponent's legs and firing a left-foot shot into the roof of the net.

Brazil threatened a rout but, as in the first game when they threw away a two-goal lead, they eased off after the break.

Van Hooijdonk's goal was probably the best of the game as he scored from a 25-metre free kick in the 80th minute.

Holland failed to achieve the historic win that they hoped for on the short tour of Brazil, although they should have achieved a win in the first game.

Ruud van Nistelrooij missed an open goal from only a matter of metres out after he attempted to back-heel the ball into the net.

The Brazilians responded in clinical fashion destroying the Dutch 3-1 in a game where the rivalry, which started during the epic semi-final in last years World Cup, escalated into a war on the pitch

IN BRIEF

Brazilian strikers Romario and Edmundo, who could be teammates at the Copa America next month, are at odds over a lavatory door.

Romario, who owns a theme bar in a Rio suburb favored by the city's middle class, has had a cartoon of Edmundo painted on the door of one of the toilets and is refusing to remove it even though the former Fiorentina striker finds it offensive.

Edmundo said that he did not see the funny side of the cartoon, which features him alongside a former girlfriend.

"It depicts me with a person who does not bring me good memories," said the volatile striker, who returned to Rio de Janeiro's Vasco da Gama last month after an unhappy 18 months in Italy with Fiorentina and is now married to another woman.

The two players were on opposite sides when Edmundo's Vasco da Gama beat Romario's Flamengo 2-0 to win the second stage of the Rio de Janeiro championship. Edmundo scored both the goals.

Romario has already been in hot water over the toilet doors.

Mario Zagallo, Brazil's coach at the last World Cup, took out a court order to force Romario to remove a cartoon of the coach sitting on a lavatory with his trousers around his ankles.



Romario and Edmundo... best of friends.

Romario was axed from the Brazilian squad on the eve of the competition with a calf injury but claimed all along he would have recovered in time to play.

Argentine international midfielder Juan Sebastian Veron has escaped from a car accident in the city of La Plata with minor head injuries.

Veron, who will join leading Italian side Lazio from Parma next season, was injured when a Chrysler he was driving crashed into a house. He needed stitches to cuts in his head.

BOCA LOSE BUT WIN

Boca Juniors have won the Clausura or closing championship in Argentinian football without even kicking a ball

Boca celebrated their victory after arch rivals, River Plate lost at home 3-2 to Racing Club.

River were the only team capable of catching Boca, who has established a huge lead in the league, and their loss meant that no one could overpass Boca at the top.

Boca's day of celebration didn't go all their way as the clubs record breaking run of 40 games undefeated, was smashed by rivals Independiente who taught Boca a footballing lesson.



Star Boca player, Mauricio Serna was pretty happy with the win.

The 4-0 loss to Independiente could not spoil the wild celebrations of Boca supporters at the ground.



Fans of Boca Juniors celebrate there win in the Clausura championship.

MARACANA TO GET A FACELIFT

Brazilian politicians announced a \$34 million refurbishment for the world famous Maracana stadium.

The Rio de Janeiro state government, which owns the historic but crumbling stadium, said the reforms were promised by governor Anthony Garotinho and the Brazilian government's sports and tourism minister, Rafael Greca.

"The Maracana will be the best stadium in the world. We will give the stadium the grandness it deserves, as it is a symbol of Rio and, with all certainty, will be transformed into a national symbol," said Garotinho.

Garotinho said the stadium would become an all-seater by January, when Brazil will host the inaugural World Club Championship organised by FIFA, and the full job would be completed by July next year, when it celebrates its 50th anniversary.

The Maracana was built for the 1950 World Cup, when a record-breaking crowd of more than 200,000 squeezed in for the final between Brazil and Uruguay.

For a long time it was the pride of the country, regularly attracting crowds of 150,000 and more, but years of neglect have left it in a shambolic state.

It has been closed for repairs twice this decade, once after the upper level vibrated alarmingly during a game and once after a fence on the edge of the upper tier collapsed and dozens of fans fell on the seats below. Three people died.

The promised reforms include construction of a museum, a car park and new ticket windows.

The state government said it would contribute, along with the local telecommunications company and the federal government.

A quarter of the money would come from the sale of 120 executive boxes to corporations, it added.

Brazil has been selected to host the inaugural World Club Championship, FIFA president Sepp Blatter announced.

Expected to pit the champions of the the six continental federations, the tournament has been set for January, but some clubs, especially the Europeans, have expressed concern over placing the tournament in the middle of their league seasons.

The European Champions League winner will be the invitee from Europe, but if it refuses, the runner-up may go instead.

When asked if this year's winner, Manchester United would take part, Blatter said no invitations had yet been offered.

Blatter again reiterated his support for holding the 2006 World Cup in Africa, adding that if the continent's candidates have the needed infrastructure specified by FIFA, Africa should be given the chance.

Brazil, however, also wants to host the 2006 World Cup, and soccer authorities see the World Club Championship as an ideal showcase.

"This championship will show the world that we are prepared to receive the 2006 World Cup," Brazilian confederation president Ricardo Teixeira said in Rio de Janeiro.



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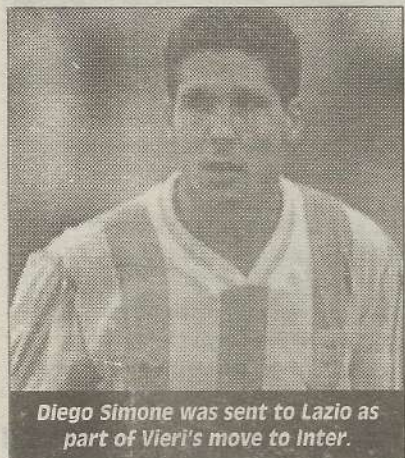
Vieri signs record deal with Inter

Italy forward Christian Vieri is leaving Lazio to play for Serie A rivals Inter Milan in a record-breaking move.

The transfer deal, which includes handing over Inter's best midfielder Diego Simeone of Argentina to Lazio, is worth around \$74 million, a world transfer record.

"Vieri is an Inter player and he will play alongside Ronaldo next season," Moratti told reporters as he emerged from a Rome hotel after meeting Lazio president Sergio Cragnotti.

Vieri should form a 'Dream Team' strike partnership with the Brazilian ace, both men working under new coach Marcello Lippi.



Diego Simeone was sent to Lazio as part of Vieri's move to Inter.

Lippi had coached Vieri during the striker's one-season spell at Juventus from 1996-97.

He made it clear during his first public appearance that he would like to have the burly goalscorer back and that wish has now come true.

Cragnotti is making a handsome profit on



Vieri now finds himself at Inter after only a season at Lazio

the deal, having paid Atletico Madrid under 30 million dollars for the 25-year-old less than a year ago.

Vieri, who was brought up in Australia, started his career in Italy in the junior ranks of Torino before spending three seasons in the second division with Pisa, Ravenna and Venezia.

His big break came in 1995 when he signed on at Serie A club Atalanta, scoring seven goals in 19 first-team appearances.

Snapped up the following season by Juventus, where he had a volatile relationship with Lippi, although the new Inter coach was at pains to stress they had always overcome any difficulties and had a good rapport, where he exploded in the latter part of the season.

However, to the fury of Juventus fans, the club sold him to Atletico Madrid that summer for 18 million dollars, about eight times what they paid for him, in a move which Juventus owner Gianni Agnelli recently admitted was "foolishness".

Vieri scored an amazing 24 goals in 24 matches for the Spanish club, becoming the Liga's top goalscorer in 1997-98.

Italy's centre forward at France 98, Vieri was one of the tournament's leading scorers in their disappointing campaign, which ended with a quarter-final exit on penalties to eventual cup winners, France.

He joined Lazio in August last year for another record fee and seemed untouchable until last month, when Cragnotti said he would only sell the striker for a ridiculous amount of money.

Brazilian Denilson had the previous world record fee, costing \$35 million when he moved

ITALY UNABLE TO SEAL SPOT IN EURO 2000

Italy's Christian Vieri was substituted in his first match as the world's most expensive soccer player, as Italy were held to a goalless draw in the European championship group one qualifier with Switzerland.

The hard-working Swiss defence kept Italy's strike partnership of Vieri and Filippo Inzaghi in check during a first half that saw neither goalkeeper do anything more than make routine saves.

The tempo picked up considerably after the break, as Italy forced the early play.

Italian coach Dino Zoff then took off Vieri, who was sold by Lazio to Inter Milan for \$74 million, in the 61st minute and replaced him with Parma's, Enrico Chiesa.

"I didn't play well," admitted Vieri after the game.

"But I had a sore muscle on my leg and had to wear an elastic bandage.

"It was not because of the

pressure, I'm always happy playing for the national team."

Zoff's changes made little difference as the Swiss, urged on by a capacity crowd of 13,000, made the running.

"Switzerland played an excellent match, especially in defence," said Zoff.

"We were tired because of our match against Wales.

"That showed especially in the second half. That is why we substituted Vieri."

Playing with the confidence that was lacking in their 2-0 away defeat to Italy last October, the Swiss produced the game's best offensive burst when they swarmed into the Italian penalty box midway through the second half.

Regis Rothenbuehler forced Gianluigi Buffon to make a diving save from just outside the penalty area.

The rebound landed at the feet of David Sesa who had his shot blocked by the Italian defence.



Maldini played well in defence against Switzerland after scoring against Wales last week.

Stephane Chapuisat, who scored both goals in Switzerland's 2-0 win over Wales, once again had a golden chance in front of a gaping net, but his shot flew well wide of the mark, where he was

expected to do much better with his chance.

"I regret that at the end we didn't attack more, we just kept the ball," said Swiss coach Gilbert Gress.

"We had good possession.

If Italy had possessed the ball as much as we did, they surely would have scored."

A win would have seen Italy through to the finals but they remained as group one leaders with 14 points.

With three matches remaining and a game in hand on Italy, Wales and Denmark, Switzerland kept their hopes of survival alive with eight points having played the Italians twice.



Luigi Di Biaggio has made himself a regular in the current Italian team following a great season at Roma following up from his brilliant performance in last years World Cup.



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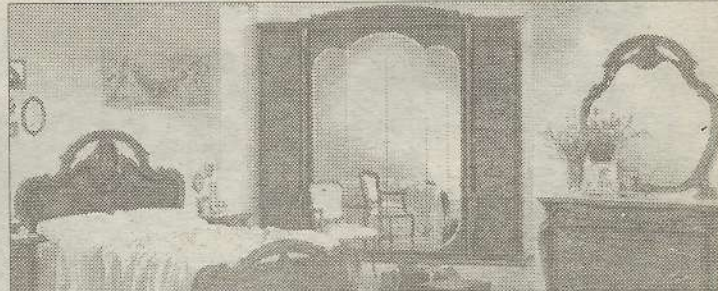


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Matthaeus to play in Euro 2000

Veteran Lothar Matthaeus has been told by German head coach Erich Ribbeck he will play in next year's European Championship.

"He is 38 but is absolutely fit and knows exactly what he has to do to stay in shape," Ribbeck said.

Matthaeus collected his 136th German cap with another fine performance in Germany's 6-1 demolition of Moldova in a Euro 2000 qualifier.



German coach, Erich Ribbeck (l) with Lothar Matthaeus.

The European champions currently top group three with 12 points from five games.

Ribbeck said he would pick Matthaeus for Euro 2000 even if he was to leave Bayern Munich to play for Major League Soccer in the United States.

"Even if he goes to America, I will count on him," Ribbeck said.

Matthaeus has received a lucrative offer from New York-New Jersey MetroStars but has said he will start next season with Bayern.

According to press reports, Matthaeus could join MetroStars during the winter break if Bayern find a suitable replacement for him.

A Bayern spokesman said a decision on Matthaeus' future at Bayern would not be made until after the German Cup final against Werder Bremen.

The Dutch are hurrying through a new law which would give police powers to separate groups of potential trouble-makers at major events in time for the 2000 European soccer championship finals.

The bill, to be tabled in parliament after the summer

recess, would enable police to maintain public order by holding people in cooling-off areas for up to 12 hours, a Dutch civil servant said.

Liesbeth Huyzer, a senior civil servant at the Interior Ministry, said no one would be under arrest but that potential trouble-makers could be kept behind in the stadiums after games.

"We have said it must be possible to pick up people, not in a penal way, not to sanction them, but to restore order," she said.

"This bill still has to go to parliament but we hope it will become law in March 2000."

Huyzer said the bill had been in the pipeline for some time but had become more urgent ahead of the European championships to be held in the Netherlands and Belgium next year.

"It is meant for all kinds of public events but we expect it to be used mainly at football matches," she said.

The Dutch have said they will speed up the judicial process for soccer hooligans and are in talks with other governments to prevent known trouble-makers from attending the championship.

The Netherlands is not immune to soccer violence as there were recent riots in Rotterdam after Feyenoord won the Dutch league.

Brazilian striker Paulo Sergio has returned to the Bundesliga after signing a three-year contract with German champions, Bayern Munich following a two-season stint with Roma in the Serie A.

German media speculated that Bayern paid \$8 million for the Brazilian, making him the most expensive transfer in Bayern history. Bayern did not give any details of the transfer deal.

Paulo Sergio joins another Brazilian in Bayern's forward line, Giovane Elber.

Elber led Bayern with 13 goals before missing the end of the season with a serious knee injury.

After winning the Bundesliga championship, Bayern is preparing another run at the Champions League title next season. It lost this year's final 2-1 to Manchester United. Bayern already had signed another striker, Roque Santa Cruz of Paraguay.

It also has German international Carsten Jancker and the Iranian World Cup star Ali Daei. Several German clubs have expressed interest in signing Daei.

Paulo Sergio scored 47 goals in four seasons with Bayer Leverkusen, before joining Roma in 1997. He



Redondo was sent off for Real Madrid as Valencia took full advantage.

Real Madrid suffered its heaviest defeat in 46 years as it was crushed 6-0 by Valencia in a stunning Spanish Cup semifinal first leg.

Not since a 6-0 defeat against Malaga in 1953 has a Real Madrid team been so roundly beaten in a competitive fixture.

The last time Real conceded six goals was again against Malaga, in the 1983-84 season but at least that night they had the consolation of scoring four goals of their own.

John Toshack's woeful Real, which will face an all but impossible task in the return leg on June 16, fell behind to a Claudio Lopez free kick on 21 minutes and was then undone in a 40-minute spell following the sending-off of Fernando Redondo four minutes later.

Valencia took ruthless advantage during that period to slot in four of their six goals, Goran Vlaovic, Miguel

A REAL SHOCKER FOR MADRID

minutes into the second half before the sending-off of Vlaovic on 65 minutes brought some relief for Real.

With the sides now evenly matched, Valencia were still able to provide the coup de grace, Spanish international Mendieta carving out some space on the edge of the area before lashing home left-footed.

The result was in marked contrast to the other semifinal when Atletico Madrid drew 0-0 with Deportivo Coruna. Both second legs are this week with the final in Seville on June 26.

Barcelona President Josep Lluís Nunez has said that a player's television appeal was becoming just as important as his on-field ability.

Nunez, speaking at the presentation of Barcelona's new signing Frederic Dehu, said the French defender's nationality would help the club's bid to get more airtime in key European countries.

"It's just as important to be number one in terms of



Barcelona coach, Luis Van Gaal (l) with new signing, Frenchman Frederic Dehu.

Angel Angulo and a double from Alain Roche doing the damage, before a red-card of their own restored some semblance of order.

Gaizka Mendieta then rounded off the scoring with a sweetly struck goal from the edge of the area on 74 minutes.

"The only thing that surprises me now is that you journalists continue to be surprised by results like this," said a combative Toshack after the game.

"Of course the fans are going to be some way short of delighted after this result."

Real, missing six first team players because of injuries and international call-ups, were deprived of another key man after 25 minutes when Redondo was sent off for a push on Jocelyn Angloma.

But by then Toshack's side had already gone behind in risible fashion as their defensive wall jumped over a Lopez free kick on 21 minutes, allowing the ball to glide in at the far post.

A series of shameful defensive errors then sent Valencia 4-0 up by halftime as Roche was twice left unmarked inside the area to score either side of a tap in from Vlaovic, the Real defence again going absent.

Angulo, turned in a Lopez cross, making it 5-0, ten

our world audience as it is to be league champions," said Nunez.

"We wanted to sign a great player and the fact that he is French just makes the deal even better because France is a very important television market."

Nunez said that France, Germany, England and Spain were the biggest television markets for the club.

"At the moment there is a television war going on to win the rights to the club's matches. That's because we're the most in-demand club in the world. We're the leaders in terms of audience."

Barcelona are hoping to capitalize on their popularity at home and abroad by signing a new television deal when their contract with Catalan station TV-3 comes to an end in 2003.

According to El Periodico newspaper, Barcelona has enlisted the help of Media Partners, the organisation that failed last year in their bid to launch a European Super League, to study the television market.

Barcelona is thought to be looking for at least 15,000 million pesetas (U.S. \$94.19 million) a year, compared with the 6,000 million pesetas (\$37.67 million) it is getting at the moment.

HAGI COMES OUT OF RETIREMENT AGAIN

Romania's Gheorghe Hagi has told reporters that he will not be retiring from international soccer after all despite officially retiring after the World Cup in France.



Hagi is back but for how long this time.

"My body and my heart tell me that I have to go on," Hagi, 34, told reporters at a press conference.

"I will play again for the national team, including next year's finals in the Netherlands and Belgium, if Romania qualifies," said Hagi, who has played 116 times for Romania, scoring 33 international goals.

He said he had been touched by the supporters' demand to drop his decision to put an end to his activity as national team's captain after Romania's win against Hungary.

"The fans' calls and especially his top form have convinced Hagi to play again in Romania's Euro 2000 adventure," said Hagi's agent, Ioan Becali.

Thousands of people gathered in central Bucharest and in other major cities to toast Hagi for his role in Romania's first victory against Hungary in 63 years.

Hagi first announced his decision to quit the national team after the 1998 World Cup finals.

But last month he said he would return for a single match, the one against Hungary.

Hagi suffered a shoulder injury at the end of the first half in the match against Hungary.

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EUROPE

Soccer Weekly

EURO 2000
IN BRIEF

An inspired hat-trick by Benfica striker Joao Pinto helped Portugal crush Liechtenstein 8-0 in its European championship group seven qualifier.

Pinto, making his 50th appearance, blasted a 30-metre shot past goalkeeper Peter Jehle in the 40th minute, dived for a header from a cross by midfielder Sergio Conceicao in the 59th and scored with a banana kick in a goalmouth scramble in the 67th. Pinto took his goal-count in the group to seven.

Pinto headed home in the 28th minute from a left cross by Barcelona midfielder Luis Figo and doubled his tally when he intercepted a shot by Joao Pinto in the 44th.

Liechtenstein's Christof Ritter scored an own goal in the 52nd minute after the ball hit his back and went through Jehle's legs.

Portugal's Rui Costa completed the rout with a powerful shot in the 80th minute and a penalty four minutes into injury time after defender Harry Zech handled.

Portugal's coach Humberto Coelho said, "The result was good and although Liechtenstein were a weak team they played well and avoided what could have been a much more serious drubbing."

Liechtenstein's coach Ralf Loose said that he wanted to avoid conceding 11 or 12 goals.

Liechtenstein, which has leaked 28 goals in their last four games against Portugal, had a rare opportunity to score three minutes from time but Thomas Beck shot wide.

Portugal now head the group with 18 points, one ahead of Romania.

Romania scored twice each side of half-time to crush Azerbaijan 4-0 in their European championship group seven qualifier.

Rapid Bucharest striker Ionel Ganea, top scorer in Romanian soccer last season, opened the tally in the 35th minute with a right-footed shot from close range.

It was Ganea's fourth goal in six international appearances. Dorinel Munteanu made it 2-0 from the penalty spot in the 44th minute after Ilgan Yadullayev's fouled Ioan Vladoiu.

The striker then headed the third in the 50th and substitute midfielder Laurentiu Rosu made it 4-0 in injury time.

Ukraine suffered a setback in their European championship qualifying campaign when they were held to a 0-0 draw in Armenia.

Ukraine had numerous chances against the Armenians, who picked up their fifth point in group four, but were repeatedly denied by goalkeeper Roman Berezovsky.

The Zenit St Petersburg keeper made three crucial saves within a five-minute span to keep a clean sheet.

First, with a minute left in the first half, he denied Andriy Gusin's header from close range. He then stopped striker Andriy Shevchenko on a one-on-one break just two minutes into the second half.

A minute later, Berezovsky stopped Serhiy Rebrov's point-blank shot for his finest save of the game.

Ukraine, who lost Serhiy Popov and Rebrov to injury during the game, remained top of their group with 15 points, three more than Russia and Iceland although World Champions, France have closed the gap at the top following their 1-0.

Martin Fabus scored in the 53rd minute to give Slovakia a 1-0 victory over Hungary in a Group 7 European Championship qualifying match.

Jozef Valachovich sent a long pass to Fabus, who deftly headed the ball into the net for the goal that stunned the home team in front of 16,000 fans.

The first half belonged to the two "kings", both teams' goalkeepers names mean 'king' in English, as they stopped anyone from scoring.

The teams were evenly matched, and both played a fast and offensive game but failed to score.

The second half saw the Hungarians slowing and the Slovakian team was quick to take advantage.

Slovakia retained its theoretical chances of advancing with 11 points from seven games. Hungary is eliminated.

The game was played in the Hungarian town of Győr, 120 kilometers west of the capital, Budapest, close to the Slovak border.



Without Zidane, France are struggling.

Andorra savoured the greatest result in their brief international soccer history by losing 1-0 to world champions France in a European championship group four qualifier.

France's tiny Pyrenean neighbours only joined FIFA three years ago and had lost all their qualifiers to date.

Yet they held a 10-man France at bay for 85 minutes until they finally conceded a penalty with a sensational draw in sight.

Chelsea defender Frank Leboeuf converted it to save French blushes.

France are second in group four with 14 points, one behind leaders Ukraine who drew 0-0 in Armenia.

"If you had asked me before the start whether I would have settled for a 1-0 loss, then yes I would have been happy with that. But now it's frustrating that we came so close," Andorran goalkeeper Koldo Alvarez said.

WORLD CHAMPS
OUT OF FORM

Koldo, who normally faces Spanish fourth division opposition, was the hero for the Andorrans who rose to the occasion in the Montjuic Olympic stadium.

He kept his team in the game on several occasions, notably twice in the first half from Arsenal's Nicolas Anelka.

Andorra could consider themselves unlucky to have conceded the penalty with Francesco Ramirez judged to have handled the ball while tussling with Anelka.

France, who had striker Christophe Dugarry sent off after 24 minutes, inevitably deserved the win after dominating the game from start to finish.

Dugarry, who played briefly for Barcelona in 1997 without scoring, made an unhappy return to the Catalan city after pushing over Andorran defender, Toni Lima.

The lack of French success in the first half left their own fans, who made up most of the meagre 8,600 crowd, whistling them off the pitch at halftime.

The supporters' frustration continued to grow throughout the second half although they went close after 62 minutes when a Marcel Desailly header was scrambled away by Koldo.

Sylvain Wiltord then crashed the resulting rebound off the outside of the post.

However just when a major upset looked about to happen, Andorra let their guard down.

"It just goes to show that there is not that much difference between ourselves and some of the top teams in Europe," Koldo added.

"I think we demonstrated that we are going to be difficult for anyone to beat," he added.

Andorra won few neutral fans with their tactics of defending solidly with nine or 10 men behind the ball.

"There was only one team in the game. They played with 10 men in defence. What else could we do but attack? However after Christophe got sent off it was always going to be hard to make much headway," said

French midfielder Emmanuel Petit.

The three points may give French coach Roger Lemerre a welcome break in the wake of last week's 3-2 loss to Russia, France's first home defeat in more than two years, but the failure to score goals will not appease the critics.



Petit... "What else could we do but attack"

France's next game will be in September although they are still in a good position to qualify automatically in group 4.



England's hopes of a crucial win in Poland were given a huge boost last night by no-hopers Luxembourg.

The Poles had to hang on desperately to hold off a late rally by a Luxembourg side who had failed to score in four previous Group 5 games.

Luxembourg scored twice in the last 15 minutes but just failed to snatch a sensational equaliser after giving away two unlucky goals.

Rafal Siadaczka put Poland in front

in the 22nd minute after a deflection by a Luxembourg defender left the ball at his feet.

Seconds before half-time Artur Wichniarek tapped in the second after keeper Philippe Felgen collided with a defender, leaving an open goal for the striker.

Tomasz Iwan then made it 3-0 in the 68th minute with a great individual effort as the Poles appeared to be heading for a runaway win.

But Marc Birsens broke Luxembourg's scoring duck in the 76th minute and the sparse crowd could hardly believe their eyes when fellow-defender Jean Vanek added a second after 82nd minutes.

The minnows from the Grand Duchy even went close to taking their first point and their shock fight-back exposed weaknesses in the Poland side which Kevin Keegan's men could exploit.

The Poles may be three points ahead of England, but the uncertainty of



Anatolakis unfortunately gave away the penalty that sunk Greece.

POLAND ESCAPE AS
GREECE IS BEATEN

Andreas Niniadis scored for Greece but it wasn't enough.

these European qualifiers show that there is no such thing as a certainty.

Mikhail Zemlinskis scored a last-minute penalty to give Latvia a 2-1 victory over Greece in a Group 2 qualifying game for Euro 2000.

Czech referee Lubomir Pucek awarded Latvia the penalty kick after Giorgos Anatolakis fouled Marian Pahars.

With the victory, Latvia made a step forward to gain a berth in the finals, while Greece's chances were nearly ended.

More than 16,000 spectators at the Athens Olympic stadium, saw Greece fail to capitalize on numerous quality scoring chances.

In addition, Latvia's goalkeeper Aleksander Kolinko made several key saves, one, a penalty kick taken by Grigoris Georgatos in the 21st minute.

Latvia's Mazis Verpaskovskis opened the scoring two minutes later from a scramble in front of the goal.

Greece tied it on Andreas Niniadis's penalty kick in the 37th minute.

Greece: Ilias Atmatzidis, Dimitris Mavrogenidis, Giorgos Anatolakis, Marinou Ouzounidis, Michalis Kassapis, Theodoros Zagorakis, Grigoris Georgatos (Dimitris Markos, 62nd), Andreas Niniadis (Nikos Froussos, 79th), Akis Zikos, Costas Frantzeskos (Yiannis Anastassiou, 60th), Nikos Mahlas.

Latvia: Aleksander Kolinko, Viktors Lukasevics, Mikhail Zemlinskis, Valentin Lobanov, Igors Korablov, Vitaly Astafjev (Imants Bleidelis, 65th), Jurijs Laizans, Andrejs Rubins (Zizmanovic, 61st), Marian Pahars, Vladimir Babicev, Mikhail Zemlinskis.

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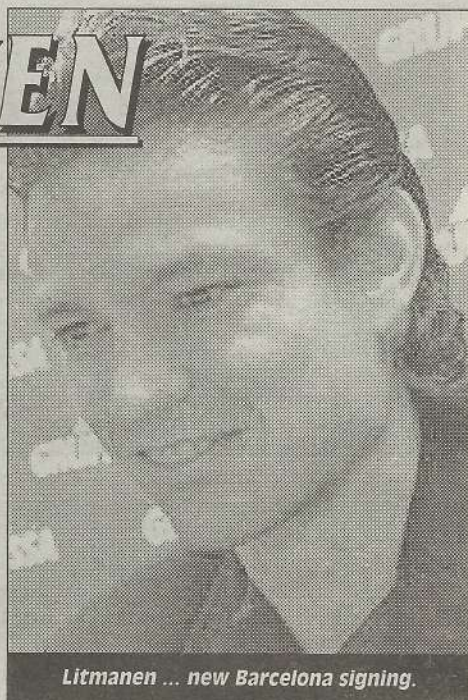
Soccer Weekly

LITMANEN

SIGNS FOR
BARCA

Jari Litmanen, the Finland international and ex-Ajax striker, finally signed for Barcelona, nine years after he was first offered the opportunity to join the Catalan giants.

The arrival of Litmanen, 28, means that Barcelona coach Louis van Gaal has reassembled almost half of the famous Ajax side of the mid-



Litmanen ... new Barcelona signing.

Litmanen, capped 62 times for his country, joins Portuguese striker Simao Sabrosa and French defender Frederic Dehu in next season's Barcelona squad, although there are still two games left to play this season.

Van Gaal said, "He'll be playing as a midfield pivot alongside Louis Enrique and Philip Cocu," van Gaal said.

"If he scores goals, great. But his role will be to assist other players score goals."



90s that he guided to the 1995 European Cup final victory.

Dutch internationals Michael Reiziger, Patrick Kluivert, Frank and Ronald de Boer have also been brought to Barcelona since van Gaal arrived as the club coach two summers ago.

"I know the players, I know the trainer. I think I will learn the system quickly," Litmanen said.

As a promising teenager with his local Reipas Lahti club in his native country, Litmanen was invited for trials at Barcelona.

"At the time I was a very young player. It was a very nice opportunity to see the club and see what was possible but I was not ready at the time," Litmanen said, as he signed a three-year deal as his contract with Ajax ran out.

"However, even though it was nine years ago, I had the feeling that one day I would be back here."

YUGOSLAVIA
BACK ON TOP

Yugoslavia beat Malta 4-1 with a double strike from Savo Milosevic in a European Championship qualifier played in Greece because of the NATO bombing campaign.

It was the first competitive match for the Yugoslavs since Feb. 10, when they beat Malta 3-0 in Valetta.

Last week their scheduled match against Ireland was postponed when Dublin refused the team visas because of the Kosovo crisis.

The Yugoslavs travelled south to the Greek port of Thessaloniki for the match as clear favourites, but a sixth-minute goal by Nicholas Saliba took the 2,000 largely Yugoslav-supporting crowd by surprise.

But Yugoslavia managed to equalize in the 34th minute when Real Madrid striker Predrad Mijatovic struck a volley from inside the box.

Surging runs by Chucks Nwoko made life difficult for



Yugoslav striker, Predrad Mijatovic(11) takes on Maltese player, Said during there Euro 2000 qualifier played in Salonica.

the Yugoslav defence for the remainder of the first half with two near misses.

The Yugoslavs, who now top qualifying group eight after playing and winning three matches, took control in the second half.

Real Zaragoza striker Milosevic, brought on as a second-half substitute, scored in the 48th minute with a right-foot shot from six meters.

In the 74th, Darko Kovacevic made it 3-1 after running around three Maltese defenders. Milosevic made it 4-1 in injury time.

Yugoslav coach Milan Zivadinovic said afterward that Malta had given his side a good run in the first half.

"But in the second half we played with three strikers, a classic set up for our team, and it paid off again," he said.

Greek soccer officials said the match could be Zivadinovic's last with the national side. He is negotiating a move to Greece as coach of Aris Thessaloniki.

Zivadinovic said the Yugoslav side would like to play its next match at the same stadium if it is still unable to stage it in Belgrade.

"I thank the Greek people and the authorities for the warm hospitality and a great atmosphere. If we can't play our next game against Croatia in Belgrade, we want to play it here in Thessaloniki," Zivadinovic said.

Maltese captain Carmel Busuttil said his side had a dream but it lasted only for the first half.

"The Yugoslavs were obviously a class apart despite playing in neutral territory," he said.

Greece is a traditional Serb friend and the only NATO member to have opposed the bombing.

The Greek football federation offered the Thessaloniki stadium for the match.

UKRAINE DOWN
BUT NOT OUT

The Ukrainian national soccer squad escaped unharmed after the plane taking them back from Wednesday's European championship qualifier in Armenia suffered two explosions and an engine fire just before take-off.

"It was a miracle no one was hurt or got killed," Ukraine's Sports Minister Ivan Fedorenko told Reuters.

Team manager Viktor Kashpur said two separate explosions destroyed one of the engines of a Russian-made Tupolev-154 just seconds before take-off as the team returned home from the Armenian capital after a 0-0 draw.

"The pilot was about to begin accelerating for take-off when we heard a huge blast, then another, and then fire broke out by the left engine," Kashpur said.

"The pilot said if the explosion had happened just before take-off or in the air, we would almost certainly be dead by now."

About 170 people were on board, including the senior and under-21 squads. They spent the night at the airport before boarding another flight back to Kiev on Thursday morning. The match ended 0-0.

Meanwhile, in a bizarre incident in the Faroe Islands, the plane carrying the Bosnian team that drew 2-2 was stopped from leaving after the local airport authority received word from Sarajevo indicating a problem, although it was the same aircraft the squad arrived in.

But a fax later in the day from the director of civil aviation in Sarajevo cleared the plane for a late-afternoon take-off.

EURO 2000 TABLES

GROUP ONE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	6	4	2	0	11	2	14
Denmark	6	2	2	2	6	5	8
Switzerland	5	2	2	1	4	3	8
Wales	6	2	0	4	5	13	6
Belarus	5	0	2	3	3	6	2

GROUP TWO

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Norway	7	5	1	1	14	8	16
Slovenia	6	3	2	1	8	6	11
Latvia	7	3	2	2	7	5	11
Greece	7	2	3	2	8	7	9
Georgia	7	1	1	5	4	12	4
Albania	6	0	3	3	3	6	3

GROUP THREE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	5	4	0	1	14	3	12
Turkey	5	4	0	1	11	5	12

Finland	6	2	1	3	8	10	7
Northern Ireland	5	1	2	2	3	8	5
Moldova	7	0	3	4	6	16	3

GROUP FOUR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ukraine	7	4	3	0	12	3	15
France	7	4	2	1	11	6	14
Russia	7	4	0	3	17	10	12
Iceland	7	3	3	1	7	3	12
Armenia	7	1	2	4	3	10	5
Andorra	7	0	0	7	2	20	0

GROUP FIVE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	5	4	1	0	6	1	13
Poland	6	4	0	2	12	6	12
England	6	2	3	1	8	4	9
Bulgaria	6	1	2	3	3	7	5
Luxembourg	5	0	0	5	2	12	0



Euro 2000

GROUP SIX

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spain	5	4	0	1	28	4	12
Israel	5	3	1	1	15	3	10
Austria	6	3	1	2	15	16	10
Cyprus	5	3	0	2	8	8	9
San Marino	7	0	0	7	1	36	0

GROUP SEVEN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Portugal	7	6	0	1	27	2	18
Romania	7	5	2	0	16	1	17
Slovakia	7	3	2	2	8	4	11

Hungary	7	2	2	3	11	7	8
Azerbaijan	8	2	0	7	9	21	6
Liechtenstein	7	1	0	6	2	30	3

GROUP EIGHT

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Yugoslavia	3	3	0	0	8	1	9
Rep of Ireland	4	3	0	1	8	1	9
Croatia	4	2	1	1	8	6	7
FYR Macedonia	5	2	1	2	9	6	7
Malta	6	0	0	6	3	22	0

GROUP NINE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Czech Republic	7	7	0	0	17	4	21
Bosnia-Herzegovina	6	2	6	2	9	10	8
Scotland	6	2	2	2	9	9	8
Lithuania	7	2	2	3	7	9	8
Estonia	7	2	1	4	12	13	7
Faroe Islands	7	0	3	4	4	12	3

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Soccer Weekly

TWO LIVERPOOL GREATS IN CHARGE OF CELTIC

Celtic has announced that Kenny Dalglish and John Barnes are the men that will take the club into the next Millennium.



Jimmy Barnes...the new Celtic manager for next season.

Dalglish will be given the title of director of football operations while Barnes will become the fifth head coach at Parkhead in as many years.

Since being unceremoniously sacked by Newcastle last year, Dalglish has been involved in an unsuccessful attempt to mount a takeover of Parkhead with Simple Minds rock star, Jim Kerr.

Dalglish was scathing of owner Fergus McCann's handling of the club, but new chief executive Allan MacDonald was still determined to land the former Liverpool and Scotland playing legend.

And Dalglish's new role will allow him to be more involved in team matters than when he decided to move upstairs as general manager at Blackburn.

Barnes, who ended an illustrious playing career with Charlton last month, has never been in charge of a team before.

But the 35-year-old was Dalglish's first choice as coach, and he comes with glowing references from other top names.

The Celtic board consulted with Alex Ferguson, Arsene Wenger, Terry Venables and Graham Taylor about the former England winger before deciding to open negotiations with him.

The former Liverpool and England star has made no secret of his desire to move into management.

He has also been closely linked with the vacant post at Sheffield United.

Although he would have preferred a No 1 role, an offer to work with Dalglish at a club the size of Celtic appears too good to turn down.

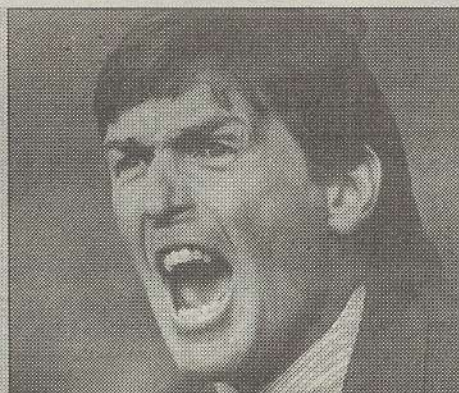
Under the ambitious MacDonald, the club are anxious to recreate the European glory days they enjoyed when Jock Stein was manager.

Barnes is seen as one of the men able to attract big-name players.

Changes were inevitable at Celtic after the club finished the season empty-handed.

The pill was made even more bitter by their 1-0 Cup final defeat at Hampden Park last month which handed Rangers the domestic Treble.

The new appointments are a major



Kenny Dalglish... director of football operations at Parkhead.

coup for MacDonald, who had promised to have the new men in place by the end of this month.

His decisiveness contrasts with the protracted bungling the fans had to contend with last year while a successor to Wim Jansen was sought.

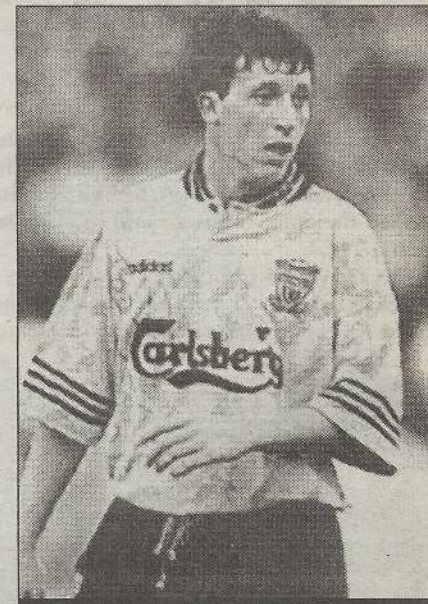
Dr Jozef Venglos, who was eventually landed with the job, will now be allowed to leave Glasgow and embark on his new role as chief scout in Europe after briefing the new men on the current squad.

Venglos remains a decent judge of a player, as his signing of overseas stars Vidar Riseth, Johan Mjallby, Lubomir Moravcik and Mark Viduka proved.

Robinson at Anfield after returning from international duty with England.

Fowler has persistently been linked with a \$17 million move from the Merseyside club to Arsenal, and despite constant denials from Houllier that the striker was leaving the club, the French manager has become increasingly concerned by growing speculation.

Fowler said: "I am fed up with the constant rumors that I want to leave Liverpool. I am very happy here and want to assure everybody that I want to play for Liverpool and win trophies for them."



Robbie Fowler will be staying at Liverpool.

FOWLER STAYS AT ANFIELD

England striker Robbie Fowler has confirmed that he will stay at Liverpool.

Fowler held talks with boss Gerard Houllier and chief executive Peter

Bayern Munich's international defender Markus Babel wants to leave the Bundesliga champion and move to Liverpool.

"I have an offer, and Bayern knows that I'd like to go," Babel said. "I simply would like a change."

"The coach doesn't want to let me go. So it looks like I am staying another year in Bayern," he said.

Bayern has offered Babel a six-year extension of his contract.

Babel, 26, is a German international.

TWO ENGLISH CAPTAIN'S AT WAR

Former England captain Gary Lineker and his rugby counterpart Will Carling narrowly avoided a potentially embarrassing encounter at a party to promote soccer's FA Premier League Hall of Fame.

Their close friendship has cooled since Carling walked out on Ali Cockayne, the sister of Lineker's wife Michelle, last September.

Carling and Lineker both attended a preview party for the new \$13 million museum in central London, which opened to the public last week.

Lineker said in an interview just over three weeks ago, "I haven't seen Will for a while."

"Obviously Ali is Michelle's sister, but she's like my little sister too. I've known her since she was 11 so we've always had that brother-sister relationship."

During the party, Carling inspected full-sized wax figures of footballing greats Dennis Bergkamp, Eric Cantona, Les Ferdinand, Peter Schmeichel, Alan Shearer and Gianfranco Zola, which are expected to help bring punters pouring into the new attraction.

The models form part of a massive multimedia exhibition celebrating all aspects of the sport and its traditions and are the first of many to be inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Carling left before Lineker arrived at the event.

Lineker, asked how things were with Carling, said, "Things are fine. There's no problem."

Of the Hall of Fame, Lineker said, "This has got to be a good thing. There is such a thirst for football in this country that this will be a major attraction."

Hall of Fame chairman Sir Geoff Hurst, England's hat-trick hero in their 1966 World Cup final victory over West Germany, said, "This concept is long overdue, they have them abroad and it's right that we should honour the greats of the game."

Asked about criticisms of the fact that four of the first six inductees are foreign, he said, "They were voted for and have made an outstanding contribution to the Premier League and football in this country."

"They are players who have added a dimension to our game."



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Cruyff: England are technically poor

Johan Cruyff has given a damning verdict on Kevin Keegan's England team, after the 1-1 draw in Bulgaria.

The Dutch great described England as a 'technically poor' side without some of the basic skills needed for international football after he watched their drab draw in Sofia.

Cruyff was the special guest of Hristo Stoichkov in his last international match, the former Dutch star was the Bulgarian captain's manager at Barcelona — but that did not stop him from handing out some scathing criticism of the visitors.

"The game was no good," said Cruyff despairingly. "It was too slow, the passing was poor and technical qualities were very bad."

"The crosses were also very poor. I know England were missing some players including David Beckham but that is no real excuse. A country like England should not have to rely just on Beckham to cross the ball."

"There must be some more people in English football who can do that but if not, you had better start teaching others. England put in maybe 25 to 30 crosses against Bulgaria and only one good one."

"It's not a very good average, is it? If the crosses are poor, it's always difficult to score goals." England must now win their remaining two matches, at home to Luxembourg on 4 September and the away clash against Poland four days later, to qualify for next summer's European Championships.

Keegan's team had the perfect start, Alan Shearer scoring in the 14th minute from a Michael Gray cross only for Bulgaria to equalise three minutes later when Teddy Sheringham failed to mark Georgie Markov and the big defender headed home Stoichkov's wickedly-angled free-kick.

Leicester City have missed out on one of the two remaining places in the UEFA Cup for next season. In a draw made at half-time in the Switzerland versus Italy European championship qualifying game, it was Norwegian club Bodo Glimt and Estonia's Tulevik Viljandi who were the lucky recipients of that Fair Play place.

Scotland, as winners of the fair play competition, were automatically awarded an additional spot, which went to Kilmarnock. Leicester City, as England representatives missed out as did the representatives of Ukraine, Finland, Denmark, Sweden and Germany.

Their spokesman Paul Mace said, "It seems we are destined to miss out on this European spot. First it was the Worthington Cup in the last minute and then this."

"I suppose if we're being philosophical it was a bonus card anyway, we didn't know much about it until one or two games before the end of the season. Then hopes were raised and in that respect it is very disappointing."



Arsenal midfielder Rémi Garde has announced his retirement due to persistent injury.

The Frenchman joined Arsenal in August 1996 from Racing Strasbourg but his Highbury career has been dogged by injury.

He made more than 40 appearances for the club, his last coming in a 1-1 draw at Newcastle when he was carried off with an ankle injury.

Garde initially decided to retire shortly before last summer's World Cup after a season in which he had struggled with glandular fever, but manager Arsene Wenger convinced the player to return for one more season.

Meanwhile, striker Fabian Caballero, who made only three first-team appearances in eight months at Arsenal, has signed for Paraguayan side Atletico Tembetary.

Centre-half Chris Perry will join Tottenham in a £5.5 million deal.

The two clubs have agreed the transfer fee for the 26-year-old defender, who will become the first Wimbledon player to leave the club following the appointment of Egil Olsen as a replacement for manager Joe Kinnear.

Perry, who came up through the Wimbledon youth ranks, has been tracked by Spurs since George Graham took charge last season.

KEWELL HOPS FOR BETTER RELATIONS

Leeds star Harry Kewell is hoping that his club and country relations improve so he can enjoy a successful career with the Socceroos.



Harry Kewell has called for both Australia and Leeds United to make up.

In the past, Kewell has been caught in the middle of an on-going row between Leeds and the Australian national side when a conflict of interests has arisen.

During the 1997/8 campaign, then-manager George Graham refused to release Kewell for a friendly international, and following a complaint from the Australian football body, FIFA responded by hitting Kewell with a one-match Premiership ban.

Relations were further damaged when Leeds brought Australian youngster Jamie McMaster to Elland Road.

He had British ancestry, allowing him to claim British citizenship, and then move only went ahead after he promised not to pledge his international future to Australia.

Kewell said, "I enjoy coming back to play for Australia and hope that in games to come we'll be able to work something out with Leeds. One of my major ambitions is still to play for the Olyroos at the Sydney 2000 Olympics."

PETIT DENIES CLAIMS THAT PLAYERS TAKE DRUGS

World Cup winning midfielder Emmanuel Petit will be called upon by the English Football Association to explain his claims that some top footballers take drugs.

FA spokesman Steve Double confirmed earlier comments by chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA), Gordon Taylor that they would be looking into the matter.

"If he has any evidence, we would like to hear from him," said Double.

"We will not be calling him before the FA at this stage, not while we are in Bulgaria with England. We will not have time to analyze it properly."

"But if he has evidence, we would like to hear it. However, the recent test results do not back that up."

Earlier, Taylor had said the FA would want an official explanation from Arsenal's French star.

Taylor, however, backed Petit's warning that the demands of the modern game are spiralling out of control.

Petit fears the increased number of matches, particularly the expansion of the Champions League, will escalate drug misuse in the sport.

"If the present number of games continues, something is going to have to give," Petit said.

"We will all have to take drugs to survive. Some footballers already do. I know that. But I am not giving any names."

Taylor described Petit's remarks as "contentious". He said, "We will be speaking to the FA today and they will want him to explain quite clearly what he meant."

"It is a contentious statement but it is well known the French players have been complaining about the number of matches. They have been playing for the last 12 months without a break."

"We are trying to achieve with FIFA an agreement for a football calendar with a proper period without club or international games so players get a proper physical and mental rest."

Taylor wants Petit to make clear whether he is talking about players turning to the type of drugs which have become common amongst Europe's professional cyclists, or merely players using anti-inflammatories to get through matches.

He said, "If he is talking about the steroid-type drugs, that for example cyclists in the Tour de France have

been using to get through the stress, then they would be illegal."

"We are doubling the number of random tests to 1,000 next season."

Although Emmanuel Petit has now denied that he had said performance enhancing drugs would become rife in football within five years and some players were already taking them because of the amount of matches played in the modern game.

But he argued: "I have never said that and if that is what has been written, then it is wrong. I want to stress that."

"What I am concerned about is what some players



Emmanuel Petit claims that players are taking drugs because of the increasing number of games.

may feel they have to do to keep playing for what is almost a 12-month season now."

"I heard talk of a World Cup every two years, that cannot be serious, I hope. That will mean no break for the players at all."

"That is when I said that some players may be tempted to use drugs to keep going. I think that a good idea would be for the representatives of UEFA and FIFA to meet with the players and let us explain the fears that we have."

"I do not know of any drugs in football and I do not want to see them. One day, maybe I will have a son and I don't want him to grow up thinking that there are footballers who take drugs."

Leeds United defender Jonathon Woodgate has ended speculation about his long-term future by signing a new four-year deal with the club just hours after making his England debut.

The 19-year-old put on an assured display in Sofia before being substituted mid-way through the second half as Kevin Keegan's men pushed for the victory.

David O'Leary is desperate to hang on to his army of young stars and has already secured Alan Smith, Stephen McPhail, Ian Harte and Paul Robinson on new, longer contracts.

Negotiations are also being held with Lee Bowyer, Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink and David Hopkin.



The only player still to be tied to a new deal is the club's Australian star Harry Kewell, but negotiations between the player, the club and his agent are at an advanced stage.

Woodgate signed the deal after the England game, which had been finalised by United chairman Peter Ridsdale and the centre-back's representatives.

It finishes off a remarkable year for Woodgate. In August he was still in the youth team.

Ridsdale said, "I am delighted that Jonathon has pledged his future to us. I said at the outset that a five-year deal would be more than perfect from our point of view but we are more than happy to agree to a four-year contract for Jonathon."

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SCOTLAND BOMB A TWO GOAL LEAD IN PRAGUE

**Czech Republic
Scotland**

**3
2**

Scotland produced a classic roller-coaster ride for their supporters in Prague when they gave an impressive performance for an hour, took a two goal lead, and finally came away with nothing after conceding three goals in the last half-hour. Yet another glorious defeat, but it was so tough on Craig Brown's men.

"I don't think we deserved to come away empty-handed. I thought we played well but to lose two goals from set-pieces was disappointing. We just didn't keep enough possession when we needed to," said the Scotland coach.

They may not have won in Prague for 62 years, and there may have been a slight hiccup in Tofir last week, but they were cast in the role of underdog tonight, and never is the Tartan Army happier than when they have been written off by every newspaper in the land.

The Czechs ensured their qualification from the group, but they knew that the Scots would be anything but lambs to the slaughter and so it proved in the first half.

On a perfect evening for football, and on a decent playing surface, the Scots made a solid start as Paul Ritchie almost marked his debut with a goal after ten minutes.

Ian Durrant floated in a cross from the right, and the Hearts man rose unchallenged eight yards from goal but he sent his header wide.

Allan Johnston created an opening for Billy Dodds as Scotland continued to enjoy plenty of possession, but the the Dundee United man couldn't find the power to trouble Pavel Smicek.

The Scots were given a warning after twenty minutes when Paul Lambert was dispossessed and Vratislav Lokvenc surged through the middle but Neil Sullivan held his shot comfortably.

The Czechs were posing plenty of problems when Patrik Berger flashed the ball across the face of the goal, but there were no takers.

But just before the half-hour, the 5,000 travelling fans were in full cry. Callum Davidson's corner from the right was met by Ritchie, and the debutant made up for his earlier miss with a super header into the top corner leaving Srnicek rooted to his line.

From the kick-off, the Czechs won a free-kick on the edge of the area, and after Berger's initial shot was charged down, Sullivan, who had a great opening period, produced a great save from Pavel Nedved's follow up.

The Czechs were seeing plenty of the ball, but they seemed to be rattled by the goal, and Scotland got through to half-time without any further concerns.



Czech Republic player Jiri Nemec(11) controls the ball as Scotland's Johnston Allen is about to put in a challenge for the ball.

Craig Brown vowed at half-time that the Scots would not sit on their lead, but it was the Czechs who were first on the attack in the second half.

Nedved had a free-kick charged down, and then the equaliser seemed sure to come when Vladimir Smicer met Berger's corner, but his glancing header was hooked off the line by Lambert.

But proof of Scotland's intent was provided when Ian Durrant found space in the area, floated the ball to the

near post and saw Allan Johnston's brave diving header double their lead.

That was the Sunderland winger's second international goal of the week. But their two-goal advantage was short-lived, as two minutes later, Nedved's corner was met with a flick header by Tomas Repka, and the ball floated in at the far post.

Suddenly the Czechs were inspired, and the Scots were at full stretch at the back. Sullivan had to be alert to deny Lokvenc, before Nedved curled a 20-yard free-kick just wide.

But with fifteen minutes left the pressure paid off. Nedved sent a pinpoint through ball into the path of the substitute Pavel Kuka down the inside-right channel and he lofted the ball over Sullivan into the far corner.

The Scots just couldn't get the ball out of their own half, and the nightmare was complete when, with four minutes left, Berger's free-kick was met by the giant substitute Jan Koller who had a free header eight yards out, and that was that.

A brave, battling performance had produced nothing, but the players can justifiably claim to have won back some pride even if the points were lost.

Czech Republic: Srnicek, Repka, Suchoparek, Nedved (Koller 65), Hornak, Hasek (Baranek 60), Nemec, Poborsky (Kuka 65), Lakvenc, Smicer, Berger.

Subs Not Used: Maier, Nikl, Galasek, Horvath.

Booked: Suchoparek, Poborsky, Smicer.

Goals: Repka 65, Kuka 75, Koller 87.

Scotland: Sullivan, Weir, Boyd, Calderwood, Ritchie, Davidson, Dodds, Lambert, Gallacher, Durrant (Jess 71), Johnston.

Subs Not Used: Gould, Whyte, O'Donnell, Gemmill, Cameron, Winters.

Booked: Davidson, Ritchie, Dodds.

Goals: Ritchie 30, Johnston 62.

Att: 22,000

Ref: Hellmut Krug (Germany).

Craig Brown watched helplessly as his side threw away a two goal lead to the Czech Republic in Prague, but knows their hopes of reaching the play-offs remain in their own hands.

Scotland will still qualify for a play-off place if they win three of their final four matches against Bosnia home and away, Lithuania at home and Estonia away.

For once, other results went in Scotland's favour. Bosnia's 2-2 draw in the Faroe Islands, coupled with Lithuania's 2-1 defeat of Estonia in Tallinn, means they hold on to second place on goal difference.

However, they have a game in hand on both Estonia and Lithuania, so nine points from their last four games will be enough.

Speaking after the game in Prague, Brown said, "I am bitterly disappointed. We played very well and didn't deserve to lose."

"I thought we dictated play in the first half and were in control in the second until they started the aerial bombardment. When you see the quality of players they have on their substitutes' bench, it shows how strong their side is."

"We carelessly conceded too many set pieces and didn't keep possession at the end when the pressure was on. But credit the Czech Republic for the result."

"Maybe we will be lucky and qualify for the play-offs, then meet the Czechs in the final. The Czech team is better than the one that finished runners up in England in Euro 96. They are better players and more mature."

"I don't think there is a better team in Europe at the moment and they have a great chance to win Euro 2000."

"What makes the Czechs different is that they can call on four outstanding strikers and their subs made the difference."

"We didn't defend corners or free-kicks well enough but the Czechs are the best in Europe at this type of play. We don't like conceding goals but we were several defenders short and it was a bit of a worry when they had the ball in the air."

"We need the likes of Christian Dailly and Colin Hendry and I'm displeased at conceding goals at set pieces. Tactically I thought we got it right and we nearly succeeded in pulling off a fine victory."

Czech coach Jozef Chovanec said, "Of course it is unpleasant to be 2-0 down and everybody felt it in the ground. But I thought the team handled it well."

"I don't want to criticise them too much. I am very lucky to work with this group of players and we have a lot of very good forwards."

"This team is always motivated and always fighting and even though Scotland defended well early on, I was never too concerned. Now my players can relax and prepare to play in the finals of the European Championships which is a marvellous achievement."

LUCK OF THE IRISH IN DUBLIN

**Republic of Ireland
FYR Macedonia**

**1
0**

After kicking their heels at the weekend, the Republic of Ireland had become rusty round the edges as they squandered some gilt-edged chances before finally killing off bogey side FYR Macedonia.

Unsurprisingly it was Niall Quinn who was the match winner as his 67th minute goal from close range separated the teams.

Mark Kennedy's in-swinging corner was pushed away but only as far as Breen who nodded it back into the danger area where Quinn applied a decisive header from a few yards out to score his 18th goal in 69 internationals.

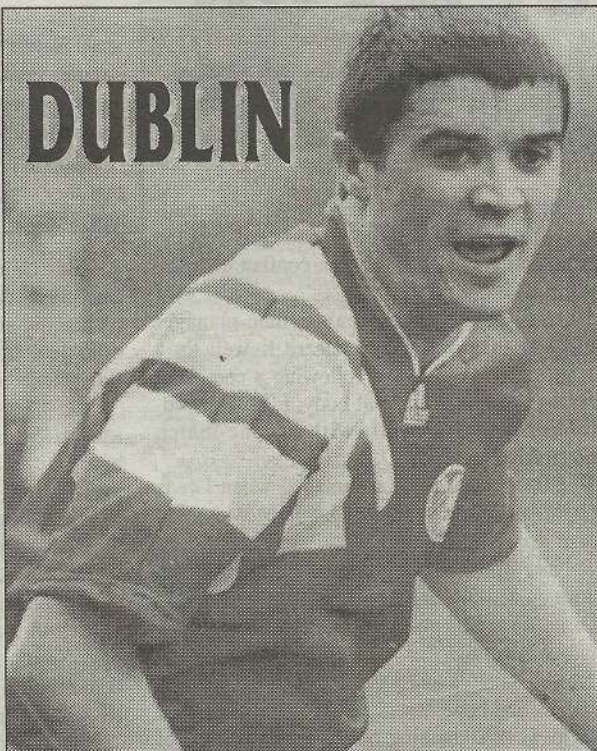
Charlton's Mark Kinsella almost opened the scoring on 43 minutes, when his shot from eight yards struck

goalkeeper Petar Milosevski before Gary Breen's looping header was cleared off the line by defender Goran Stavreski.

Mark Kennedy was proving a constant threat, repaying the loyalty Mick McCarthy showed in him as replacement for Jason McAteer.

It was Kennedy who provided a cross for Robbie Keane in the 18th minute who shot wide twice from the edge of the box. Denis Irwin also got in on the act when his cross somehow evaded the unattended Quinn in the area.

Ireland almost got a second when Keane struck a post after racing through as he then powered a header over the top before he was replaced for



Roy Keane ... almost scored but his shot crashed against a post as Ireland won at home, 1-0.

the last 20 minutes by Tony Cascarino.

It would have been no less than an encouraging Irish side deserved, but they nearly threw it all away when Sasa Ciric raced behind skipper Kenny Cunningham and as Alan Kelly raced off his line he chipped the goalkeeper but the ball landed on top of the bar.

A close shave, but the night belonged to Ireland, and it is Mick McCarthy's side who now top the group.

The future of Ireland now rests in the hands of UEFA after failing to play Yugoslavia last week, the Irish may be kicked out of the Euro 2000 qualifiers.

Rep of Ireland: Kelly, Carr, Irwin, Carsley, Cunningham, Breen, Kennedy, Kinsella, Quinn (Connolly 82), Keane (Cascarino 69), Duff (Kilbane 63).

Subs Not Used: McLoughlin, Babb, Maybury, Kiely.

Goals: Quinn 67.

FYR Macedonia: Milosevski, Sainovski (Sedloski 72), Stavreski, Stojanovski, Nikolovski, Babunski, Trajcov (Medmedin 46), Micevski, Ciric, Trenevski (Hristov 77), Sakiri.

Subs Not Used: Jovcev, Zaharievski, Bozinov, Gosev.

Booked: Hristov.

Att: 28,108

Ref: U Meier (Switzerland).

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ENGLAND STRUGGLE TO DRAW AGAINST 10 MAN BULGARIA



Teddy Sheringham was unable to find a last minute winner for England.

Bulgaria 1
England 1

England's already slim chances of qualifying for next year's European Championship finals receded even further when it was held to a 1-1 draw by Bulgaria, which played the last 30 minutes with only 10 men.

The result was a bad one for Kevin Keegan's revamped team, which showed six changes in the starting line-up from the side that drew 0-0 with Sweden at Wembley.

It left them in third place in the group, four points behind Sweden, who have a match in hand, and three points behind Poland who beat Luxembourg.

"We simply did not create enough chances," said disappointed England skipper, Alan Shearer, who put England ahead after 15 minutes with a well-taken turn and shot.

But England allowed Bulgaria, which had already lost any hope of qualifying for the finals, to equalize three minutes later, when slack marking at the far post left Georgi Markov free and he did superbly well to head home an angled free kick from Hristo Stoichkov.

It was only the second goal Bulgaria had scored against England in eight matches over 37 years and it might be enough to cost England a place in the playoffs.

England was denied what looked like a spectacular goal in the opening stages when Jamie Redknapp lashed

The Dutch official gave him his second yellow card for appearing to elbow England defender, Sol Campbell when both men went for a high ball.

England started the game the more confident and won an early corner which the Bulgarians defended well.

Robbie Fowler's return to the side began with an early booking after only three minutes after a late challenge on Milen Petkov.

Before long, Alan Shearer won a free kick about 30 yards out which Jamie Redknapp took, and wasted completely.

Bulgaria were now coming more into the game and seemed to have weathered the early storm.

England's passing had begun very poorly and was hampering their progress.

It seemed that England's troubles were over when it appeared as they had taken the lead as Jamie Redknapp fired a free-kick in from 30-yards out after 11 minutes. It flew into the top right hand corner of the net which referee Mario Van Der Ende controversially disallowed. He ruled that there had been pushing in the box and the kick was retaken, and wasted.

But within four minutes England were in front. Michael Gray produced a cross from the left which Rosen Kirilov got his foot to but the ball fell at the feet of Shearer.

Shearer turned expertly to fire the ball into the left hand corner of the net after 15 minutes.

It was a goal which managed to steady England nerves in a game they knew they had to win.

Bulgaria however were level within three minutes. A foul by Teddy Sheringham gave Hristo Stoichkov the chance to swing in a cross from the right touchline and his cross found Georgi Markov who beat Sheringham to the header to put the Bulgarians back on level terms after 18 minutes.

The Bulgarians were now on top and Gareth Southgate was booked soon after the goal for a block on Hristo Yovov.

It was a blow for England to lose the lead so soon after taking it, and it seemed to knock the confidence back out of the players.

Bulgaria dominated for much of the match with a series of dynamic runs through the middle and the home side should have taken the lead in the 38th minute, when Stoichkov ripped through the England defence on the left.

His cross eluded goalkeeper David Seaman and

defender David Batty and found Hristo Yovov in space a metre from goal but somehow he blasted it high and wide. He made way for the equally unfortunate Petrov at the break.

Stoichkov went off 16 minutes from time to a hero's farewell after making his 83rd and last appearance for his country, bringing an era to a close.

The greatest-ever Bulgarian player, a former European player of the year, said afterwards he was

"I am pleased with the spirit of the lads and their discipline. The English didn't surprise me with anything."

England coach, Kevin Keegan, taking charge of the team for only the fourth time, said, "We started well but once we let them score, we allowed them too much space and time to play. It might be a disappointing result, but we are not out of it yet."

Bulgaria: Dimitar Ivankov, Redostin Kichichev,



Captain, Alan Shearer once again hit the target with this shot after 15 minutes.

definitely quitting the national team but would continue to play for his club.

Bulgarian scorer Markov said, "It had never been in my dreams that I would score a goal against England. I think we lost the chance of victory with only 10 men."

Coach Dimitar Dimitrov, celebrating his 40th birthday, said, "I think that while we still had 11 men we had most of the chances."

"Yovov could have decided the match and I am convinced that if he had scored we would have won. When we were reduced to 10 men we had to leave one striker up and counter-attack."

Zlatimir Zagorac, Stanimir Stoilov, Georgi Markov, Rosen Kirilov, Stilian Petrov, Hristo Stoichkov, Hristo Yovov, Milen Petkov, Ilian Iliev.

Subs: Gospodinov, Borimirov, Grouev, Stoianov, I Petkov, Batchev, M Petrov.

England: David Seaman, Michael Gray, Phil Neville, Gareth Southgate, Sol Campbell, Jonathon Woodgate, Jamie Redknapp, David Batty, Teddy Sheringham, Alan Shearer, Robbie Fowler.

Subs: Rio Ferdinand, Ian Walker, Tim Sherwood, Ray Parlour, Kieron Dyer, A Cole, E Heskey.



Jamie Redknapp holds his head after the draw in Sofia.

home a direct free kick from 25 meters.

Dutch referee Mario van der Ende, who broke up the match with his constant whistle-blowing, disallowed the goal, saying he had not blown for the kick to be taken.

He also controversially sent off Bulgarian Martin Petrov after 59 minutes, just 14 minutes after the Bulgarian had come on for his international debut as a halftime substitute.

WE CANT PASS, SAYS KEEGAN.

England coach Kevin Keegan admitted that his side's lack of invention, especially against a ten men Bulgaria, had not been good enough to make chances to win a game which England had to win.

But Keegan can still see hope. "We're still alive," he insisted.

Keegan conceded that he had expected far more from his much-changed team.

"I suppose the biggest disappointment for me was that when Bulgaria went down to 10 men, we just couldn't find any invention to open them up."

"We had to win and when you have to win a game, going forward at every opportunity and being inventive, you have to expect more than we got tonight."

"I'm not even going to try and defend some of the passing as I've not seen it in training, only in the past two games."

Keegan believed the problem of passing, where England could not penetrate a well-drilled defence, was due to the one thing Keegan offers the players, confidence.

"It certainly wasn't due to a lack of effort. Our passing just has to get better and that's a confidence thing and that will come back," insisted Keegan.

"I've said to the players that the passing and the invention are the two things that have been missing over the past two games."

"The passing will get better. The invention has to come as well, otherwise we are going to struggle to beat teams."

"There were a few players who didn't do themselves justice and others who had spells where they played well but never sustained it for 90 minutes."

England coach Kevin Keegan claimed the sending off of Martin Petrov had worked against his side in the 1-1 draw in Bulgaria.

"When they went down to 10 men, that gives us a little bit more pressure but it shouldn't," Keegan said.

"You should be saying 'alright, we can pick them off' but football is not like that."

Keegan tried to defend his charges but admitted that his side had not performed.

"At least these players have come out and given it their best shot in the last two games but their best shot hasn't been good enough."

"It hasn't justified the ability they have got and that is the saddest thing for me."

Keegan then looked forward to the key game in Katowice in September against Poland.

"I was led to believe that if we beat Luxembourg and the Poles beat Luxembourg, then we have to go to Poland and win. It's the two results against each other that counts," he added.

"It leaves it alive for us, that's for sure, and the opportunity to qualify is still there."

"Maybe we could count ourselves lucky but why shouldn't we be lucky?"

A disappointed Alan Shearer spoke of his frustration after England's disappointing 1-1 draw in Bulgaria.

The England captain, who opened the scoring in the 15th minute only to see the Bulgarians equalise three minutes later, said, "It's no consolation scoring and it's a disappointing result."

"We didn't create chances and we didn't pass the ball. There is passing there and there is a will to win but we made mistakes. At times we make the wrong decisions."

"I am disappointed with the two draws on but we are not out of it. It looks like we will have to qualify through the play-offs but we've done it before and we have to do it again."



AUSTRALIA

3

Zelic, Emerton, Margas (o.g.)

WORLD STARS

2

Yakin, Rufer